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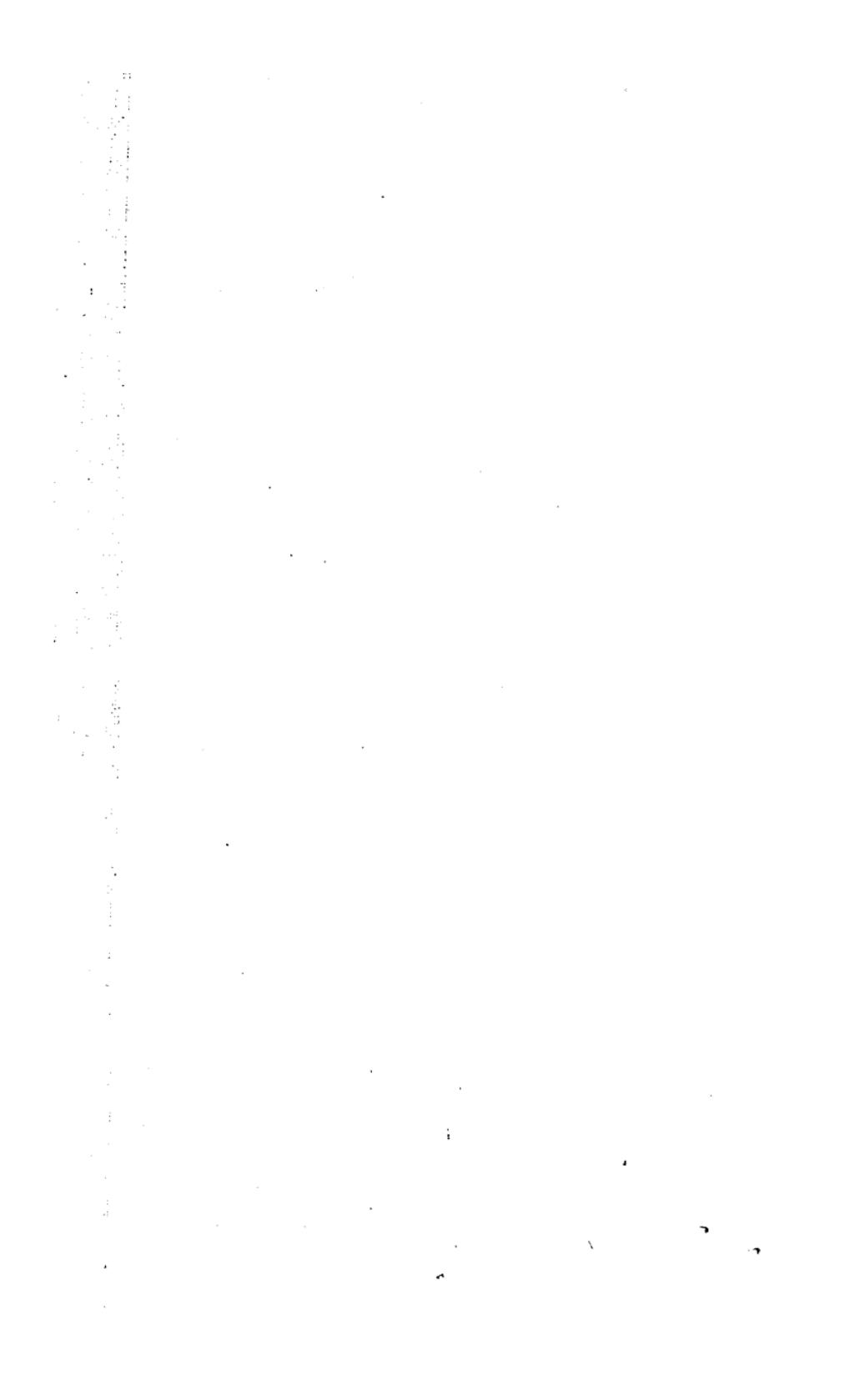


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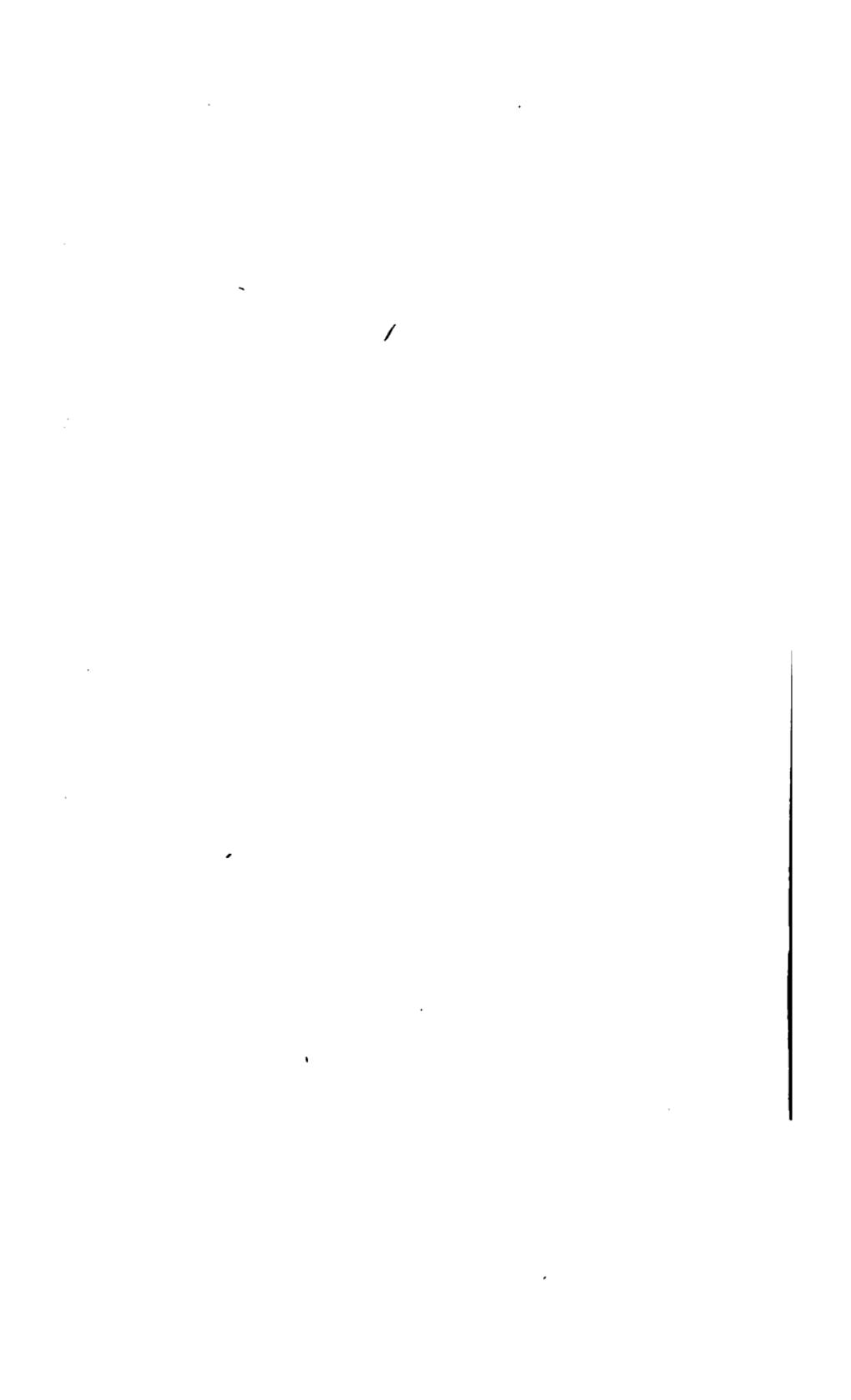
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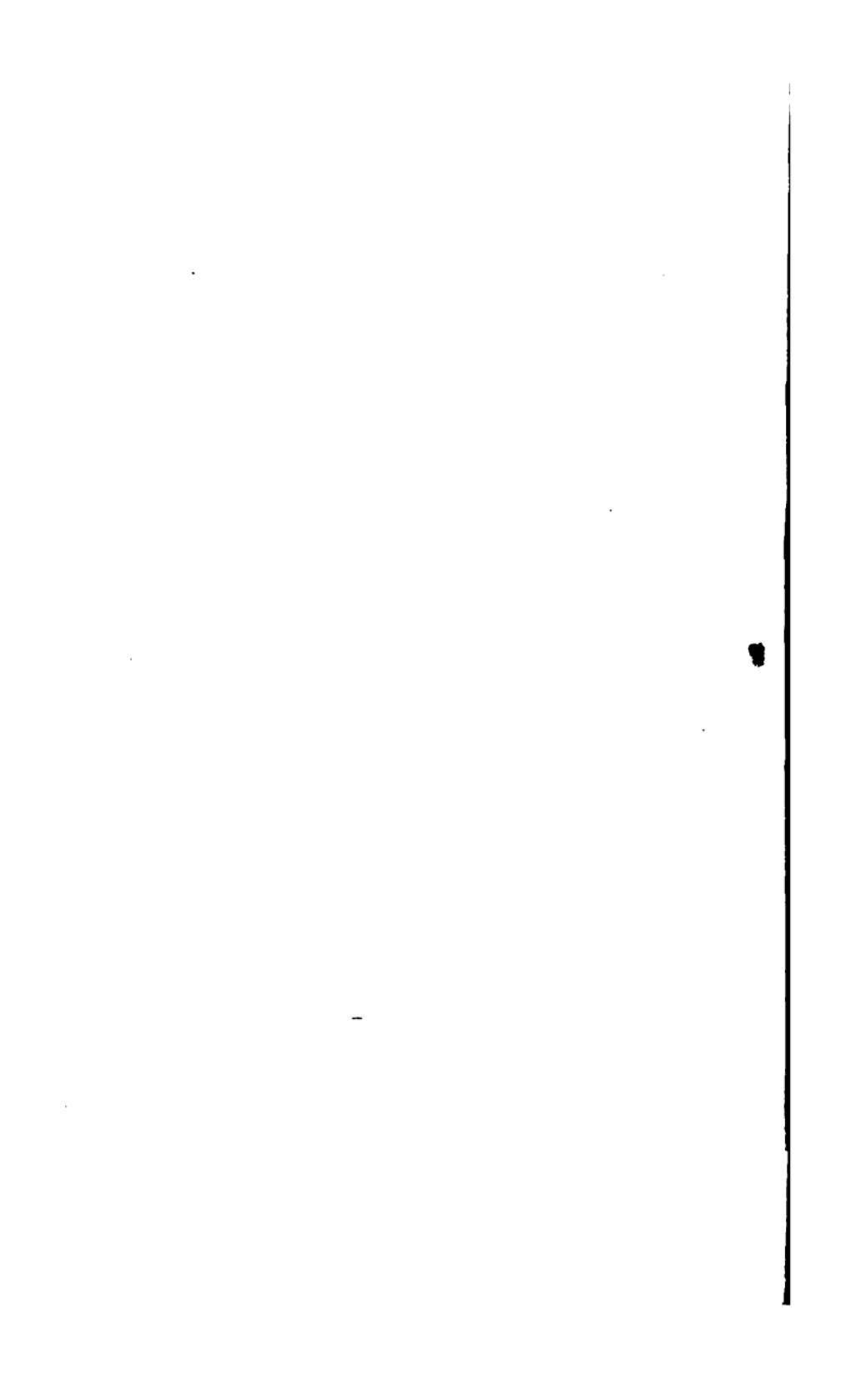
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MY UNCLE THOMAS.

A ROMANCE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

—
FROM THE FRENCH OF

PIGAULT LEBRUN.

—
—

"Nunc est ridendum."

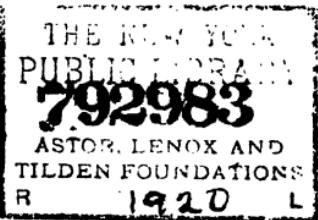
"Laughter holding both his sides."

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MY UNCLE THOMAS.

CHAP. XIII.

First Arrangements between Lady Seymour and my Uncle.

DURING dinner, of which Fanny stood greatly in need, she from time to time stopped, and, fixing her beauteous eyes on the ceiling, seemed lost in meditation ; she sighed, and the name of Seymour expired on her lips. She then returned to her plate : for of all the appetites to which the human frame is subject, perhaps the most imperative is that of hunger.

When she had satisfied it, and a delicate lady never eats much, she began to converse ; while my Uncle, free from care and inquietude, abandoned himself to the pleasures of the table, nearly the only one with which he was acquainted.

"Where is he ?" said the tender and affectionate lady.

"At Oxford," answered Thomas ; at the same time tearing to pieces the leg of a turkey.

"Alas ! what will he do ?"

"Abandon himself to despair."

"How am I to afford consolation to his soul ?"

"You must write to him."

"And how in time of war am I to send my letter ?"

" Faith, I never thought of that."

My uncle finished the leg of the turkey, and tucked a bottle of wine under his girdle, while Fanny seemed wrapped in reflection.

The Commissary of Marine, as I have informed you, was a man of amiable manners ; he was also a man of an amorous disposition. He had not paid implicit belief to the history my uncle had related of the misfortunes of Lady Fanny ; and, in fact, it was somewhat difficult to give credence to the quality of a woman under the protection of such a character as my uncle ; however, Frenchmen are ever singularly attached to the Graces ; and she who is possessed of them, is sure to excite their admiration.

The Commissary thought the English lady very pretty and agreeable ; and he was perfectly right : she was so in every respect. He would have been extremely happy to have set a price on the service he had performed ; and it was natural enough. Be upon your guard, ladies ; never suffer yourselves to be indiscriminately under obligations to all descriptions of mankind. In particular, mistrust a man of an amiable and insinuating exterior : and at the same time do not altogether forget that men who have the least to recommend them, are sometimes as imperious as the rest of their sex.

The Commissary, to whom I now return, presented himself immediately after dinner ; and announced himself, not with that tone of familiarity which never fails to excite disgust, but, nevertheless, with that air of confidence which was sufficient to put those to whom he addressed himself on their guard. His physiognomy was open, affable, and engaging : and seemed to convey, even to the most modest woman, the idea that he would love her, if he was not already engaged to another.

He presented himself with the air of a man who considered pleasure the chief end of life—and the

pleasure of pleasing, the supreme of human happiness.

Fanny received him as one to whom she was under obligations. She addressed him with that candour which betokens wisdom, with that charm which adds to love, and with that expression of tenderness towards her husband which destroys the hopes of a lover.

The Commissary, who was a man perfectly well bred, cautiously avoided the least indiscreet overtures; he did not even utter a word which could produce a frown on the brow of my uncle, who was extremely scrupulous with regard to whatever concerned the Lady Fanny. He was convinced that he must confine his pretensions to her friendship, and he determined to merit it. A well-bred Frenchman is ever gratified if he can inspire a sentiment even of that description.

He listened with sensibility to the recital of the misfortunes of the amiable English lady. He sincerely pitied her; and, what was of infinitely more importance, he gave her the address of a merchant at Hamburgh, who would receive, under cover, and forward to England the letters of the young and affectionate bride.

A woman who loves, is never inattentive to the least circumstance. Fanny thought that inaction and grief were incompatible with each other. She concluded that her dear Seymour would not confine himself to deplored her loss within the walls of a University; but that he would proceed post to London, throw himself at the feet of his father, or at those of Lord Chatham, or, perhaps, at those of the King, who, according to her notion, could not avoid expressing the most lively interest in her favour. Poor girl! she little knew that Kings and courtiers never occupy themselves upon subjects where sensibility alone is interested.

"That will have a very glaring look," murmured Fanny.

"Yes, Madam, scarlet; and of the finest quantity that can be procured, and white satin lining."

"But, Thomas, you don't consider it is summer time."

"It is no matter. I will also have the coat ornamented with gold lace, two inches broad."

"Surely the weight will be insupportable."

"It is no matter, my Lady, I am determined to be coveded all over with gold. I will have a hat turned up in the Spanish fashion, and decorated with a large plume of feathers."

"But, my friend, I understand it is only persons of rank who are entitled in France to wear feathers."

"No matter. Besides, as I do not know my father, I may suppose myself noble as well as the richest contractor in the kingdom; and as I wear a sword, I shall give an incontestable proof of my nobility to whoever dares dispute it, by running him through the body in an instant."

"A pleasant mode, truly, of evincing your nobility."

"There is no one more certain. Come," said he to the mantua-maker, "you know what we have determined upon. Let every thing be got ready by six o'clock."

"Six o'clock, Sir! Why it is three already."

"By six o'clock, I say."

"But, Sir"—

"None of your arguments. Let them be got ready."

"Reflect, my friend," said the fair English lady; "what you require is impossible."

"I will pay double or treble if it is necessary, but obeyed I will be. Let them employ thirty workmen if it is necessary."

"You shall be obeyed, Sir," said the mantua-maker, who had pricked up her ears at the mention of such an increase in the rate of payment:

"At six o'clock, then?"

"Yes, at six o'clock."

"And her Ladyship's dress also?"

"Yes, all shall be got ready."

My uncle, to express his approbation, took an enormous goblet, and filling it with brandy, desired the mantua-maker to empty the contents. She declined; he insisted; she persisted in refusing, and he was no less obstinate in insisting upon her taking it. Lady Fanny urged the impropriety of my uncle's conduct, in making a person intoxicated from whom he required expedition. Thomas felt the full force of this argument, and submitted. The mantua-maker departed, and proceeded home, in order to prepare for the metamorphosis of Fanny, and the companion of her adventures.

The Commissary returned with a bill upon a merchant at Hamburgh, drawn by one of the most respectable houses in Dunkirk. This bill reminded Fanny of what she would not have forgot, if her imagination had not been occupied upon so many different subjects at once; it was that my uncle had not a crown left, and that the bill amounted to more than a hundred louis.

"It is no matter," said my uncle; "we must have Lord Seymour with us. Send him this paltry scrap of paper; and while our clothes are making, I will traverse the whole city but I will find out some means of paying for them."

Fanny was actuated by a sentiment of delicacy; she anticipated the insults to which she would be subject, if my uncle did not procure the necessary funds;—to lose a day in beholding the object of her affections, was still a greater evil. She secretly flattered herself that the persons employed to make their dress, would not resist her pressing

solicitations, and that they would agree to wait till the sale of the English ship. That, however, was a circumstance which could not be calculated upon with any degree of certainty ; and as my uncle had very justly observed, the speedy arrival of his dear Lord Seymour was indispensably necessary, the bill of exchange was accordingly enclosed in a letter, and forthwith despatched by the post.

My uncle proceeded in search of his generous lender. He knew not his name, and he might in vain have inquired for a usurer in a city where the universal reply would have been—"What usurer do you mean?—we have so many of them here." In fact, Dunkirk is in this respect a little Paris. You may there find all the vices of the capital: the ignorant pride of opulence—the impudence of impending bankruptcy—a luxurious style of living without the means of supplying it—a mode of speaking half French and half Flemish, not much unlike that which distinguishes the Fauxbourg Saint-Marceau—and an affected politeness, more uncouth than downright rusticity. These you may find in abundance. You may also discover merchants who do honour to their profession, a few men of wit, a few others who possess a solid judgment, three or four handsome women, and five or six who may be styled agreeable ; and let me tell you that's very well for such a small city as Dunkirk.

Let us return to my uncle. He went in search of the usurer, but could not find him. He then inquired for the chief prize-agent, a sort of animal which is easily found every where. Accustomed as my uncle was to extremes in every respect, he demanded ten thousand francs to be advanced him at interest, to be repaid out of the produce of the prize.

A prize-agent, as every one knows, is never backward in lending his money; but then he always takes care to have ample security; and the

exterior of my uncle did not indicate the assurance of any very solid pledge: ~~He~~ knew that he was Captain of the prize; but the cargo might be lost, or deteriorated. A man, whose whole merit consists in the faculty of speculating, ought to speculate with certainty; and in order to do so, it is necessary to anticipate every probable event. The prize-agent foresaw that it would not be prudent to run the risk of losing his principal; he therefore very politely conducted my uncle to the door, who went away, at the same time wishing him at the devil. He repeated his demand to four or five merchants, from whom he experienced every mark of civility, accompanied by the most positive refusals to accommodate him.

In the mean time it was necessary the lady should be dressed, and that she should have money at her disposal. My uncle had had a good dinner, and he could either sleep in the porch of the parish church, or in any other place. But her Ladyship! s'death! her Ladyship! to expose her to the insolence of the master of the inn, or the mantua-maker—the idea was revolting, insupportable.

He had been for two hours wandering about the streets, in the utmost state of agitation, beating his breast, and swearing—ah! how my uncle would swear at times! He was passing by a public-house, from whence issued loud peals of laughter, and the shrill discord of five or six croaking voices. They happened to be his companions, who, with their ladies, were driving away care, and burying the remembrance of their past hardships at the bottom of a can of strong beer.

My uncle entered, and every one arose; they presented him a mug, and desired him to help himself to a slice of bread and salt butter, or Dutch cheese, which ever he liked best.

"It is not that I want," said my uncle; "have you got any money among you?"

"Not a sou, Captain; but we have found a fine fellow of a host who gives us credit till we receive our shares."

"Will you," said my uncle to the inn-keeper, "board myself and a lady upon the same conditions?"

"Why not, noble Captain?"

"Let me see what accommodations you have for that incomparable woman."

It was a dirty, mean garret, which could scarcely be approached without creeping on all fours. It contained a miserable bed, the covering of which was as black as the ground; and the whole place was perfumed with such a strong scent of tobacco, that even a German could not have supported it.

My uncle rushed down stairs without saying a word; he emptied a full quart mug at a draught, and vented his rage in oaths. A man always swears more at his ease after he has moistened his throat. He exclaimed—

"It is money I want, and s'dath! I must have it, cost what it will! We're within a couple of hundred yards of the ocean, from whence we may go and plunder the English. Follow me. We will demand a boat of the Port-Captain, and muskets of the Commandant of the place; we will then depart for the Downs, and carry off the chest of the English Admiral. We may divide the spoil without the interference of the Admiralty, or the prize-agents; and I shall be enabled to appear before Lady Fanny with full pockets."

He was addressing himself to heroes who did not care to have their throats cut without a necessity for it, and who were perfectly well contented with the agreeable kind of life they led at Dunkirk. They all exclaimed against the extravagance of the project, which in fact was that of a madman. They endeavoured to dissuade Thomas, who, despising their arguments, turned his heels upon them, and

proceeded, with a soul oppressed with despair, towards the inn where he had left Fanny.

He kicked open the door, to the great astonishment of the lady.

"Madam," said he, "I can do nothing for you. You are without resource; and I only come to propose to you to make an end of yourself after the English fashion. Take my arm: I will conduct you to the Quai de la Corderie, there throw you into the water and I will throw myself after you; to-morrow, when the sluice is opened, we shall be buried, where many have been buried before us, in the bellies of the fishes, who will, in their turn, retaliate upon us the numbers of their kind we have devoured in our time."

To a person in love, life is ever desirable. The proposal of drowning herself in company, appeared to Fanny as ill-timed as that of carrying off the English Admiral's chest had appeared extravagant to my uncle's brave knights of the beer can. Besides, during the absence of Thomas, affairs had assumed a different aspect. The Commissary would not advance any money; that article excepted, every thing he had was at Fanny's service. He had represented to the master of the inn that it was his interest not to disoblige his guests; that my uncle would live in the style of a Nabob; and that when he received his money, he would not examine the items of the bill. A Commissary of Marine is a very important personage, and has necessarily a great ascendancy over an inn-keeper. He easily obtained from the latter, on behalf of Captain Thomas and his companion, what the publican had granted to the rest of the crew. Nothing remained but to settle with the mantua-maker and milliner; and if they would not hear reason, Fanny determined to confine herself to her room—a much more sensible resolution than drowning herself, as my uncle had proposed.

Assured with regard to the most pressing wants of the lady, his attachment to life returned, and he ordered a bowl of punch. It was necessary to pass the time in some way or other till the arrival of the dresses. He despatched huge goblets, as he said, to avoid idleness ; and as there were only two things in the world he was capable of doing, namely drinking and fighting, it necessarily followed that when he was not engaged in the latter, he was occupied in the former.

The young lady knew nothing but how to love. She could speak on no other subject but her tenderness towards Seymour ; she employed herself in writing to him, in order to beguile her time : she had filled four pages, when the milliner and mantua-maker made their appearance.

The tender emotion with which Fanny was penetrated while she was waiting, had spread over her whole figure a certain ingenuous charm and native grace, and an expression mild and beneficent, which it was impossible to resist. At the very first word she uttered, the milliner and mantua-maker deposited their packets on the chairs, and esteemed themselves happy in having an opportunity of obliging so interesting a lady.

My uncle, abashed, stared with all his might. Since he had become acquainted with Fanny, he had experienced that real merit, aided by other amiable qualities, attracted the admiration of every one ; yet he could not conceive how two women who had been better bred than himself, could possess such sensibility.—Vanity and self-love transform us into strange creatures. There is no man, however low his condition, but thinks himself superior to every one else. I have no doubt but my shoe-black would accept the office of a First Consul—all I hope is, that it will not be offered to him.

CHAP. II.

My Uncle goes to the Play.

“ COME, ladies, since you are so kind, you will take a glass of punch?”

“ Excuse us, Sir.”

“ I assure you it is excellent, and is not over strong.”

Thomas, thus saying, poured out three glasses, and presented one to each of the ladies. The milliner and the mantua-maker waited respectfully till Fanny drank to them. Thomas, who was a stranger to all kind of ceremony, continued quaffing away, and examining the inside of the packets. He found every thing Fanny had ordered. He was very well pleased, but it was not all he wanted; he was looking for the laced coat he had been promised against the evening, and with which, since he had renounced the whim of drowning himself, he was anxious to adorn his person.

The mantua-maker, emptying her glass, and wiping her mouth, observed that she imagined she had fulfilled his intentions by serving the lady first, and that it had not been possible, in so short a time, to get his coat finished.

“ Then I will wear it unfinished.”

“ And where will you go in it?” said Fanny.

“ To the play.”

“ To the play! What a ridiculous idea!”

“ No matter; I wish to scrape acquaintance with Captain Sabord.”

“ But Sir” — resumed the mantua-maker.

“ Well, what have you to say?”

"The collar is not put on."

"I will have it without the collar."

"But, Sir, you have no hat ready."

"I will go without a hat. You appear to be our friend; do you therefore bring me the coat just as it is, and never trouble yourself about the rest."

The mantua-maker seemed to hesitate.

"S'death! I entreat you!"

It was impossible to resist a request so earnestly made, and she immediately went away for the coat.

"Surely, Sir," said Fanny, "you do not imagine I will accompany you in such a grotesque dress as you are going to wear?"

"Do you prefer the one I have on, then?"

"No, I neither like the one nor the other; besides, I have a violent head-ache, and if you will allow me, I will remain here."

"What do you mean by allowing you! Order me to-day, to-morrow, to eternity! Thomas is, and ought to be, no other than your humble slave. I will go to the play by myself; but I will first order you a bowl of warm wine, spiced with lemon, cinnamon, and nutmeg."

"No, no, I will write; that will do me more good."

"Well, do as you please; but it is the first time I ever heard writing was a cure for the headache."

The mantua-maker soon returned with the suit so ardently wished for. My uncle instantly pulled off his own tattered garments, opened the window, and threw them into the street. Out of respect to the lady, he went into another room, put on the breeches with gold knee-bands, but unfortunately he had no knee-buckles. He buttoned the breeches over his black stockings, and then cleaned his shoes with the sleeve of his dirty shirt. He put on the waistcoat, which he buttoned up to his chin,

to hide the said dirty shirt ; and covering the whole with his laced coat, was completely dressed. He proceeded to the middle of the room, strutted about, and stopped before a glass. The collar of the dirty shirt appeared above the waistcoat ; to obviate which, he seized the bottom of the yellow taffety curtain, which he tore right across, and folding it together, made a cravat, which entirely concealed his chin, and the half of his face—a fashion which now-a-days is thought extremely becoming, but was at the time my uncle adopted it, and ever will be, as ridiculous as all other fashions that are calculated to distort the symmetry of nature.

While my uncle was dressing, Fanny continued her observations, to which he paid no attention, but indulged himself in copious draughts. He had not absolutely drank himself into a state of intoxication ; but he was far enough gone to be deaf to all kind of remonstrances. He even obstinately refused to wash his hands and face, because, as he said, he was determined to preserve at least those glorious marks of his prowess and exploits. He descended, accompanied by a servant, who was to conduct him to the Theatre. The servant, seeing him so fantastically dressed, burst into a loud fit of laughter. My uncle, enraged at his insolence, applied his foot with such force and dexterity to his breech, that he soon converted his laughter into tears ; he then made him march before him.

He arrived at the door of the Theatre, and was proceeding to enter without ceremony. He was asked for his ticket—he did not know what it meant. The Ambassadress of Spain, whom he had sometimes accompanied to the Opera, and other public places, always entered without paying, because she engaged her box for the season ; and my uncle was consequently firmly persuaded that the comedians

played for nothing. By the by, this is generally the case, at least in the provincial Theatre.

But how is it there are now twenty Theatres at Paris, though five are deemed sufficient when the population was greater, and money more plenty? How is it that certain of them fail every year? The reason is, that there are two-thirds more than there are any occasion for. Why not abrogate a law, which, while it appears to favour industry, totally depresses merit, by depriving those who cultivate the stage, of the means of existence? Why do not pretended actors resume their mechanical labours, by which they might live honestly instead of incurring debts, and inspiring disgust? Why are the laborious classes of society to have the small remains of morality they possess, vitiated by the scenes exhibited on the stage? Why cannot the public confine their encouragement to the Théâtre de la République, the Opera, the Italian Theatre, and La Fedean? The actors of real merit, attached to those Theatres, might then live, if not in opulence, at least in a style of comfort and independence, indispensable to the culture of the arts. Why? —— Why? —— I might make twenty volumes out of a single chapter of *Whys*.

My uncle had no ticket. He inquired where he could procure one; he was conducted to the lobby; he thrust his hand into the wicket, and the door-keeper asked him what place he wished to have.

“ S'death! the best, to be sure !”

“ Here's a ticket, Sir—thirty sous, if you please.”

“ How! thirty sous! for what?”

“ Have you not read the bills?”

“ I cannot read. Let me have a ticket, and upon the faith of a sailor, I will pay you to-morrow.”

“ We never give credit here, Sir.”

"No? Then a murrain seize you! Tell me, is there a goldsmith, who lives near this place?"

"Yes, Sir, close by; the third door to the left." Thomas instantly departed.

He arrived; he entered, and found the citizen.

"Come, old dad, cut me off thirty sous worth of lace, and let me have the money."

The goldsmith, astonished, surveyed him without returning any answer. My uncle, impatient, tore the lace all down the front of his coat.

"Make haste, old fox! I have no time to lose; let me have the value of this piece of lace."

The goldsmith gave him twelve francs for what was worth forty; and my uncle, enchanted, returned to the box-door, with his ticket in one hand, and his money in the other, strutted along as proud as a peacock and seated himself in a box with an air of impenetrable seriousness.

His coat laced on one side, the lining only basted on, and flying open at the least motion of the wind—his black hair, which seemed as if it had not been combed for a twelvemonth—his uncouth figure—his dirty hands, which he hung over the box, the better to display the richness of his dress, all combined in exciting the general laughter and hisses of the pit, ever more insolent, or more just than the rest of the spectators.

My uncle, persuaded, and in fact is was so, that no one was so richly dressed as himself, had not the least conception that he was the object of laughter. He would not have hesitated an instant in jumping into the pit, and chastising the Flemish laughers, who, before they ridiculed another, should have recollected they were themselves the laughingstock of every country but Flanders.

They commenced the Overture of *l'Amoureux de Quinze Ans.* The music is old but the poetry is dictated by the Graces, who are ever young. My uncle, who knew nothing about the Graces, grew

weary at the second scene, and began hissing the performance with all his might.

"Turn out the fellow that's hissing!" exclaimed the pit, who alone exercised that privilege, and who at Dunkirk applauded l'Amoureux de Quinze Ans, because it was the fashion to imitate whatever was done at Paris.

My uncle, who revolted at this insolent apostrophe, turned his breech towards the audience; and holding a flap of his coat in each hand, stood in that posture, and still continued hissing. The Flemish,* who only differ from the rest of mankind by their tastes and habits, but who are in other respects very good sort of men, as we are assured by those who can develope their qualities under appearances not altogether the most engaging, were indignant at the insult offered them by my uncle. They rushed out in crowds, and proceeded right to the box he occupied. My uncle, whom nothing intimidated, tore up a bench, and swore he would knock down the first that approached him.

The city was at that time commanded by Monsieur de Chajieu, a good officer, an amiable man, and generally beloved. Foreseeing the tragedy that was on the point of commencing, he left his box, calmed the irritated minds of the audience, and sent the Port-Captain for my uncle. Thomas answered that he had nothing to do with the commandant; that he had paid his money to see the play, and had purchased the right of either hissing or applauding as he liked. The Captain of the Port backed his invitation by the presence of six grenadiers of Auvergne, whom he ordered to enter the box, with fixed bayonets. My uncle replied

* I am describing the Flemish as they were forty or fifty years ago. There are at present but few towns so brilliant, and where so agreeable a society is to be found as at Dunkirk. They still retain a little of the provincial accent, but it is wearing away by degrees.

that he was sure the regiment of Auvergne were not assassins, that he would meet the six grenadiers in the morning, sword in hand, if it would amuse them; but that he would not stir an inch till he had seen Captain Sabord.

The Corporal who commanded the troop, twirling his mustaches, and addressing my uncle, asked him if he would go out?

"No, scoundrel!" answered Thomas, fiercely.

"Fire!" exclaimed the Corporal.

At that tremendous word the women wrapped themselves in their cloaks, and endeavoured to make their escape. Numbers saved themselves by flying towards the galleries; two, in consequence of the fright, were delivered in the Theatre, and one in the passage; some were trod under foot in the lobby, and some on the staircase. Husbands, wives, lovers, brothers, cousins, and children began crying, lamenting, and swearing in French and Flemish. The whole Theatre of Dunkirk resembled at once the Tower of Babel, and Noah's Ark.

The Corporal had repeated the fatal command—his grenadiers, who were brave men, could not bear the thought of killing a man as brave as themselves in cold blood. Monsieur de Chalieu had time to intercede; he entered the box, and without employing any other weapon than that conciliatory mildness which nothing can resist, persuaded my uncle to rise and follow him.

He addressed him with such persuasive reasonings—the severity he was obliged to display, was tempered with such tenderness, that the violent, ungovernable Thomas admitted he had done wrong—begged the commandant's pardon, who excused him on account of his maritime exploits, and advised him immediately to return to his inn; which my uncle would have done but for the interposition of a new incident, which he could not foresee any more than yourself.

The mantua-maker's husband was absent when his wife had taken the coat to Thomas. He returned at the very same moment with her, and was much displeased to find she had delivered goods upon credit to the amount of eighteen hundred franks. It was in vain his wife represented to him that Thomas absolutely insisted upon going to the play, and she could not refuse the solicitations of the lady. The taylor, who was as obstinate as a mule, or who had perhaps received credit himself for the goods, went out with an intention of going to the play, and either to receive the money or take back the clothes. The lady had purchased gowns to the amount only of five or six hundred franks; therefore the scarlet cloth, the white satin, and the broad lace were the principal objects; and it is not at all astonishing the taylor should think of them in the first instance.

Tranquillity was nearly restored at the Theatre Monsieur de Chalieu had foreseen, or at least he thought he had foreseen, every thing; and the audience were waiting for the continuation of l'Amoureux de Quinze Ans. It is difficult to paint the passions, and not feel the effects of them. The young actress who performed Lindor, experienced secret wishes; she had long been ogled by a Flemish youth, whose rosy cheeks and handsome mien could not fail to excite admiration. A cruel, or rather an avaricious mother had prevented the young couple meeting each other; their sighs filled the air, and their only enjoyment was to see one another at the distance of forty paces.

The moment the tumult commenced, the old mother lost all recollection. Women in years always wish to render themselves objects of attention, say those who slander them. However; no one attended to this good lady, and happily for her vanity, she had fainted in earnest. The Dunkirk youth

was tender, and consequently timid ; but a secret voice seemed to whisper him, and say—" Leap upon the Theatre, take Lindor under your arm ; she will resist, but do you insist ; she will yield, and then conduct her—where you can."

My young Flemish hero obeyed to a tittle this secret voice ; and just at the moment when every ear was attentive, and every eye fixed on the scene, Monsieur le Baron, or Monsieur le Marquis—'faith, I don't exactly know which of the two, but one of them, came forward, and after bowing thrice, as usual, informed the audience they could not go on, because Monsieur Lindor, who was to perform Mademoiselle Toinette in the after-piece, was dead, or not to be found.

The mother could not remain for ever in a swoon, even though no one came to her assistance. She returned to herself just as the Baron, or the Marquis, had announced the disappearance of her daughter. She advanced towards the stage, drowned in tears ; and beating her breast, addressed a pathetic discourse to the audience, which was frequently interrupted by sighs. At length she tore, with an air of dignity, a cap, made of a remnant of the robe of Zacharie, and a cloak, cut out of an old petticoat of Chimène, two characters in which her daughter was highly celebrated. Monsieur de Chaliu was apprehensive that this new species of ridiculous folly would occasion fresh disturbances ; he therefore ordered the curtain to be let down, and the performance concluded.

My uncle had promised not to return to the Theatre. Incapable of forfeiting his word, he paraded up and down before the door. He wanted to treat the grenadiers who had spared his life, and to run the Corporal, who had ordered them to fire on him, through the body. Such was the state of affairs when the taylor arrived.

He met my uncle full in the face—

" My money, or my clothes !"

" You shall have neither the one nor the other."

" Well, then, expect the consequence."

" Do you look to that."

And thus saying, my uncle seized the taylor in his vigorous arms, and threw him against a stove filled with lighted coals, which was placed for the accommodation of the doorkeeper, who received the money. The taylor got up with the fire sticking to his breeches. My uncle dealt him a blow on the side of the head, which knocked off his hat and wig, and sent him reeling against one of the pit doors ; his foot struck against the threshold ; he stumbled, and rolled in the midst of the spectators, who crowded together to avoid the fire which the taylor appeared to carry about him. The threadbare coat of an old poet, who could not get out of the way fast enough, caught fire ; and the flame soon communicated to the periuke of an advocate, and from thence extended to the wigs of all who were within reach of the conflagration.

In about five minutes the pit presented the appearance of a brilliant display of fire-works. Every natural or artificial head-dress was covered, pressed, and squeezed by the coat-flaps, hands, and handkerchiefs of the sufferers. Vain efforts ! Two hundred persons were in five minutes as bald as the palm of your hand ; and their lamentations sufficiently attested the poignancy of their pains and afflictions.

Monsieur Chalieu, astonished at this new and unexpected incident, but still preserving his usual presence of mind, ordered the engine, which was always in readiness behind the scenes, to be brought forward. He was instantly obeyed ; and it was directed with such dexterity and success against the blazing toupees of the affrighted spectators, that in a very short time the whole pit was inundated, and the flames entirely extinguished.

In the mean time the taylor, forgetting he had lost the hinder part of his coat, and the seat of his breeches, began, as soon as the fire was put out, to recollect his broad lace ; and he demanded justice against my uncle of the Burgomaster, who, from motives of economy, had given up the seat he was entitled to in the boxes, in favour of his wife, and usually sat in a corner of the pit. The Burgomaster, jealous, as all civil Magistrates are, of the military authority, eagerly seized an opportunity of contesting its jurisdiction. He not only was desirous of plaguing the Commandant, but he was furious against my uncle, who had been the cause of his robe, cravat, and full bottomed wig having been reduced to ashes, and his skin covered with blisters. He began to take the information even while he was in the pit ; he ordered that Thomas should be taken up, and prosecuted for having cheated an honest tradesman, interrupted the play, delivered three women, burnt his creditor's breech, and some of the best heads in the city.

The Bailiff, whose wife had lost among the crowd her false chignon, her false teeth, her false hips, and her false bosom—whose full Bishop's sleeves and fine furbelow had been torn to pieces, and who consequently had appeared in her natural state, and was humbled, vexed, and driven to despair—this same Bailiff sided with the Burgomaster ; and it was decreed between them that my uncle should be sacrificed a victim to the wounded vanity of those he had been the means of exposing.

The two magistrates violently demanded my Uncle Thomas of the Commandant. The latter, to whom they had rendered themselves disagreeable, by continually attempting to thwart his views, retired with his Staff-Major, observing that the civil power had its own officers, and that the soldiers of Auvergne were not bailiffs' followers.

While the Burgomaster and the Bailiff were in search of five or six of their rascallions, the taylor had collected together about thirty or forty of those whose pates had been burnt in the pit ; they all fell pellmell upon Thomas, who remained firm at the door, laughing at the mischief he had created. One tore off a sleeve, another the front of his waistcoat, a third the half of his breeches, a fourth the rest ; and before he could recollect himself, my poor uncle, who but late made so brilliant an appearance, found himself reduced to his black stockings, his shoes, and his dirty shirt.

A hero in his shirt is very little to be dreaded. My uncle, extremely embarrassed with his person, advanced, drew back, and was tossed to and fro by the crowd, who hastened from all quarters. He at length found himself in the midst of the public market, where he was soon abandoned to his reflections, and the keen air of a strong north wind, which alternately raised the front and back part of his shirt, to his no small discomfiture.

The search after him still continued ; and numbers passed close to him, without ever suspecting that the poor sailor immovable on the pavement, was the brilliant hero who had caused so much tumult.

You are doubtless astonished at the immovability of my uncle. I am going to inform you the reason of it : he was waiting for the approach of the Corporal ; and the disgrace he had experienced, had singularly added to the acrimony of his temper. For want of the Corporal, he would have fought the first person he met.

When the Theatre was wholly cleared, the Corporal returned with his detachment. He was crossing the market-place without giving himself a thought about my uncle. The latter advanced with outstretched neck, and his shirt streaming in the air, and energetically defied the Corporal. The

Corporal, who was well disciplined in the science of defence, coolly answered that he would conduct his troop to the barrack, and that he would immediately return. My uncle followed him to the corner of la Rue du Sud, telling him he would wait there till he came back.

In fact, the Corporal returned in about five minutes after, with a sword by his side, and another under his arm. He tapped his adversary on the shoulder without speaking a word; they proceeded together to the Esplanade, and each put himself on his guard.

Thomas was very expert at the broad-sword, but knew nothing of fencing. Too loyal and brave to seek an advantage, or dispute the choice of weapons, he attacked with impetuosity; he raised his arm, and threatened the Corporal's bald pate with a most tremendous blow. The Corporal ward-ed it off, and ran his sword through his adversary's body. My unfortunate uncle fell; the Corporal raised him up, placed him on his back, conveyed him to the Marine Hospital, and delivered him into the hands of the attendants at the infirmary; after which he quietly returned to his bed.

Reflect a moment on what a slender thread the highest destinies depend; a quarter of an inch higher or lower, to the right or to the left, and the heart, breast, or lungs would have been perforated; Thomas would have lost his life, and you the sequel of this immitigable work.

What a misfortune for posterity! Console yourself, reader, with respect to the fate of that great man. His wound was not mortal; and you will arrive at the end of the second volume, if you have but the courage to read on.

CHAP. III.

My Uncle leaves Dunkirk.

IT was by this time eleven o'clock at night, and Fanny had not observed the time pass. She had continued writing and writing, and still the same subject over and over again ; but lovers are never tired of repeating their passion to those who are never tired of hearing it.

However, at eleven o'clock, a certain degree of fatigue in her fingers, her candle almost burnt out, and a noise on the staircase, made her remark the long absence of my uncle, and determined her to ring the bell.

A female servant came up ; she was followed by the inexorable taylor, who came to demand the remainder of the effects his wife had delivered. After the taylor appeared the usurer, who had been informed my uncle was killed, and who trembled for his money. After the usurer appeared the host, who also believed Thomas dead ; and knowing that Fanny had no title to succeed to his property, had come to desire her to remove her place of abode.

The taylor brutally demanded the property his wife had left. Fanny returned no answer ; she hid herself behind the curtains, undressed herself, resumed her own miserable dress, returned, and made a packet of the rest, which she presented to the taylor ; at the same time regarding him with a suppliant and mournful air.

The taylor surveyed her.

" How beautiful she is !" said he ; " how grief adds to her charms ! "

She still held the packet. She had her arms extended ; but the taylor thought no more of his property. He still contemplated her ; in fact, he could not keep his eyes off her. A tear that started from Fanny's eye finished her victory.

" But may I depend upon you for paying me ?"
" I do not know, Sir."

" Well, whether you pay me or not, I will not leave you naked. Keep what you have got; and I will be gone, satisfied with the pleasure of having performed a good action."

He immediately went out.

The usurer assumed that wheedling tone, which is so familiar to those kind of gentry. He informed Fanny of the accident which had happened to my uncle ; he expressed his fears as to the consequences which might result from his premature death.

At this unexpected news the young lady shed tears in abundance. She had developed the amiable qualities of my uncle even through the disguise of his uncouth and even ridiculous behaviour. She was attached to him, not only in consequence of his eccentric qualities, but from a principle of gratitude. His death left her alone on a foreign land, without support, without protection, and without resources. It was impossible for her to receive any tidings from Seymour in less than eight days ; and it was even uncertain whether he could rescue her from her melancholy situation. Sure she had sufficient reasons to justify her tears ! She, however, exerted courage enough to answer the usurér, informing him that his money had been disposed of, that she was very sorry it was so, but that doubtless the heirs of my uncle would acquit a debt acknowledged to be justly due ; and, that sooner or later, she hoped to have the means of indemnifying him. He could return no answer ; it was not Fanny

who was his debtor. The usurer politely took his leave ; and indeed it was the best mode he could adopt.

The master of the inn only remained ; he had made up his mind, and nothing could make him swerve from it. The prayers and entreaties of the unfortunate young lady produced no effect. He informed her she must leave his house that very instant.

" Well," said she, " where can I go at this hour ? "

" Where you please—what do I care ! "

" Alas ! I shall be the victim of every misery and humiliation which accompanies poverty and distress."

" Away ! Away ! no talking ! "

He was pushing her out ; and Fanny was retiring, her face concealed with her hands, when the Commissary of Marine made his appearance.

The Surgeon-Major of the Hospital had informed him of the splendid victory obtained by the Corporal, and he was coming to offer his services to the lady. He was shocked at the conduct of the master of the inn ; and the distressed situation of the lovely female did not allow him to consult his interest, which he in general preferred to his pleasure. He offered her his arm, and conducted her to the Chapeau Rouge, where he gave orders that she should want for nothing, and he would be answerable for the expenses. He left her consoled with regard to her present destiny, and the life of her friend Thomas, and proceeded to join a brilliant society of *bons vivans*, with whom he supped at the Place d'Armes.

His heart was wholly occupied with the charms of Fanny ; his soul was exalted by the idea of her misfortunes, and the unshaken mildness and constancy with which she met them. He depicted in

glowing colours the situation of that interesting woman, who had hitherto been spoken of only as an adventurer. Whatever is extraordinary seizes the imagination, strikes and draws it away with irresistible force. In an instant every mind was disposed in her favour ; and from indifference, or perhaps from contempt, there was a sudden transition to the most lively interest in whatever concerned her. The next day ladies of the first quality went to see Fanny ; their houses, their tables, their wardrobes, nay, even their purses were at her disposal—Fanny only required their protection. She obtained their friendship, and was from that moment the wonder of the day ; she was extolled to the skies, her company was anxiously sought for, and every one was prodigal in heaping favours on her.

That state of serene tranquillity, that inward satisfaction, which resulted from the kind attentions she experienced, and the consciousness she was not unworthy of them, did not prevent her from thinking of my uncle Thomas. She went to see him ; she recommended him to the surgeons and the nurses in the infirmary ; she consoled him as soon as he was able to attend to her ; and to those who observed that such conduct on her part was not consonant to the customs of France, she replied that gratitude was a debt acknowledged in every country, and that she could not do too much for a young man, to whom she was indebted for the hope of again beholding her dear Seymour, and all the happiness she might derive from his presence.

When it was known that her friend was young, and, what was still more, that he was a handsome youth, every one became interested in his favour. The ladies could not visit him—they were rigid observers of those ceremonials established by custom ; in fact, women of quality generally are so ;—but they made ample amends, by sending him jel-

lies, confectionary, wine, linen, and every other necessary. They demanded, and obtained, that he should be accommodated with a room to himself, and treated with every possible degree of attention.

In the mean time the Commissary, whose heart and head cooled by degrees, recollecting he had become answerable for Fanny's expenses; and, as I have already informed you, he was extremely fond of his money. Sometimes misfortunes are of service. He could think upon no honester means of disengaging himself from his word, than placing my Uncle Thomas in a situation to discharge the obligation. He therefore urged the Admiralty to sell the English prize; and the sale was at length fixed for an early day.

Let us now return to the young Lord Seymour, whom we left at Oxford, abandoned to the most dreadful state of despair. Separated from Fanny, who alone made him fond of life, he at least wished to see some one with whom he might converse about her, and with whom he might mingle his tears and sorrows. He had returned to London, and every day he was with his worthy father-in-law, Mr. Thompson.

Old Lord Seymour and the Minister employed by turns caresses and threats to render him submissive to their views; but he continued unmoved by their solicitation. He in the most respectful manner opposed their menaces; and every evening proceeded on foot to a tavern, where he met the good old man.

One day Seymour arrived as usual. He found Thompson walking hastily to and fro in the room, rubbing his hands, and apparently under the impression of the most extravagant joy.

"She is recovered! she is found!" he exclaimed, the moment he saw the young Lord; at the same time throwing his arms around his neck, and giving vent to his tears.

He had that morning received a letter from his daughter ; he drew it from his bosom, kissed it, and gave it to the impatient and tender Seymour to read. You know its contents.

"I will set out to-morrow for Hamburgh," said the young Lord, weeping for joy in his turn ; I will hasten on the wings of love to console the wretched Fanny. But, my father, I am yet a minor, and I cannot abuse the confidence of a young man, to whom I have only rendered an ordinary piece of service."

Thompson relied upon the generosity and integrity of Seymour ; however, he had not ventured to flatter himself that he would carry his attachment so far as to leave his country for the sake of his daughter. He pressed his son-in-law to his bosom.

"I have a thousand pounds sterling in ready money," said he.

"It is enough ; let me have them. I will give you letters to my mother's tenants ; you will show them when I am on the Continent, and obtain sufficient to reimburse yourself."

"No, my Lord—no, my son ; you shall not return any part to me. It is Fanny's dowry ; go, and be as happy as you deserve to be."

Every thing was settled between them. In the course of the evening Seymour, to avoid all suspicion, returned home at a very early hour. Richard and old Thompson made every necessary arrangement. The youth stole from his father's house at day-break, and proceeded on board a Hamburgh vessel in the Thames, that was to sail the next tide. The worthy father remained till the arrival of the moment so anxiously looked for, and so much dreaded. Their farewell was truly affecting. Thompson was far advanced in years ; and he scarce flattered himself with the idea of again beholding either his son-in-law or his daughter.

"At least," said he; when the vessel was under sail, and he was obliged to leave it—"at least I have the satisfaction of leaving my dear child in the hands of a man of honour; and such a one is ever under the protection of Heaven."

The very short period in which he had prepared for his voyage, did not allow him to think of every thing; and he had forgot the most essential article. Seymour could not enter France without a passport from the Court of Versailles. He exposed himself to the risk of being apprehended, and treated as a spy of the English Government. He reflected upon this circumstance as soon as his heart was somewhat reposed, and allowed his head to exert its faculties. He was sensible of the danger he should run; and he saw no other means of avoiding it than writing to Fanny, and desiring her to join him at Hamburgh. This, however, presented innumerable inconveniences; the length of the journey, the dangers a young handsome woman would necessarily experience, the possibility of her being taken ill by the way—these were insurmountable obstacles; he knew not on what to determine.

As soon as he had lost sight of the coast of England, he entrusted his situation to the confidence of the Captain, who, as he was not in love, immediately saw the matter in a clear point of view.

In answer to a variety of imaginary schemes of the young Lord, he pointed out one which was perfectly simple; it was to take post at Hamburgh, and proceed with all possible expedition to Furnes, the last town of the States of Austria in Brabant. That town was but four leagues from Dunkirk; in two hours Fanny might join her husband, and then they might go where they pleased.

Twelve days had elapsed since the young lady had written, and no answer had reached her. The day her father received her letter, his time had been too much occupied to afford him leisure to write.

The day after the departure of Lord Seymour, Thompson had written ; but the Hamburg mail had been detained by contrary winds.

The despair of Fanny was at its height. She foreboded nothing but misfortunes—her father dead, and her husband inconstant, or the victim of paternal authority. She was setting by my uncle's bedside, weeping, because she could give more unrestrained vent to her tears there than elsewhere, when she was informed that a country-woman desired to speak with her.

The war with Austria had interrupted the communication between Furnes and Dunkirk. The women alone were allowed to pass and repass freely. Seymour had stopped at the extreme frontier between the two towns ; and he had despatched a peasant's wife in his post-chaise, with orders to stop within a hundred paces of the barrier, enter Dunkirk with a basket of eggs on her arm, and deliver a letter and a parcel to his amiable and affectionate spouse.

Fanny descended without the least emotion, to see who it was that wanted her. She received the letter, opened it, and read it. Her eyes sparkled with joy, her cheeks resumed a roseate tint, and she raised her hands towards heaven in an ecstacy of transport. She returned up stairs, embraced my uncle, who was quite astonished at her conduct, left the parcel the villager had delivered her on the table, hastened down stairs, ran, flew, perceived her husband's chaise, redoubled her speed, rushed forward, leaped into it, and the horses galloped off ; —in a short time she found herself in the arms of Seymour.

Past misfortunes are no more than a vain dream, the remembrance of which vanishes at the first rays of the sun. The youthful couple commenced a new life in the bosom of peace and happiness.

My uncle was wholly unable to account for the precipitation, the silence, or the delirium of Fanny. He sat up in his bed, reflecting as much as such a man as my uncle may be supposed capable of doing so, and he concluded that Fanny was absolutely mad.

"No matter," said he, "my ship will be sold to-morrow, and I will provide for the poor woman some way or other; it is the last service I can render her."

This mode of reasoning, if it did not prove his penetration, at least showed the goodness of his heart. He took up the parcel which lay on the table; he examined it in every sense of the word; he broke the seal; it was filled with gold; precisely the same sum he had given Fanny, and she had sent to Seymour!

"Where the devil did this money come from? Has she been playing some trick with the Commissary, or any one else? Fie! fie! Thomas; away with such ideas! But where the devil did the money come from?"

He called the person who attended on him.

"Here's a guinea," said he; "run all over the city, and find my Lady, and bring her here. I am vexed she should have borrowed of any one but myself. Am I not her oldest friend?"

The attendant hastened through the whole city. He went to every house, and exerted himself to the utmost to gain his guinea, but he could learn no tidings of Fanny. She had left the city by the shortest road, without taking leave of any one. Her sudden disappearance, and the vain search made after her, gave rise to a thousand absurd speculations. Some said the Commissary of Marine had concealed her at his country villa at Rosenthal; others would have it that the Burgomaster had locked her up in his brewhouse. Various other conjectures were formed, equally absurd and rid-

iculous : but women, you know, must talk ; besides there were many of them who had some private reasons for guessing at the Commissary's country-seat, and the Burgomaster's hop-sacks.

" Well," said Thomas, when he had heard the report of his messenger, " I was right in my conjecture ; she has run mad, and drowned herself. May God, if there is one, as my mother assured me there certainly is, be merciful to her, and grant her peace in the next world !"

He passed the greater part of the day in commenting upon and regretting the tragical end of Fanny ; his thoughts still recurring to the money. He clearly saw she had determined to pay her debts before she died ; but he could not conceive how she had acquired the means. A letter, which was brought him in the evening, terminated his impatience ; and his attendant, who had become his *factotum* and secretary, informed him of its contents.

It was from young Seymour, who, with all the warmth of gratitude, thanked him for what he had done for his wife, and who related to him in two pages, what you will read in twelve ;—it is not my fault if I am not so concise as I could wish to be.

When Thomas knew that Fanny was with Seymour, and that they had at their disposal a considerable sum, and expected still greater remittances from England, he leaped from his bed, and danced about the room in his shirt. He laughed, sung, and performed all manner of antics ; and when he was wearied, he returned to his bed, and began revolving in his mind his present situation. He thought that a man who had four thousand francs in his possession, ought not to lay at an hospital like a beggar. He desired a coach to be called, and ordered the coachman to conduct him to the

Chapeau Rouge, the master of which, he said, had won his heart by his kind behaviour towards Fanny.

His first care was to demand an account of what she owed—Seymour had sent and paid the host. He then inquired for the milliner and mantua-maker—they had also been satisfied.

“ What a devil of a fellow,” he exclaimed “ this Seymour is! He has not left me one single enjoyment. Ah! ah!” said he to the mantua-maker, “ I hope I shall have my coat, since it has been paid for with the rest of the things.”

“ Here it is, Sir,” she replied, untying a green wrapper.

Her husband had had time to new sleeve and perfect this brilliant but unlucky coat. He had hung it out at his shop, in hopes some player would purchase it; but as those sort of gentry, like authors, are never overburthened with ready money, and unless they can persuade the taylor to give credit, seldom trouble his shop, the coat had remained hanging on the peg; and it was to that circumstance my uncle was indebted for the recovery of it.

Enchanted with the events of the day, and having nothing but himself to attend to, he ordered a bottle of Bourdeaux wine to be mulled: after which his bed was warmed, and he retired to it, and soon sunk into a sleep, sweet as that enjoyed by the peaceful and the just.

Thomas did not rise till late next morning. At ten o'clock he sent for a coach, and repaired to the port, in order to be present when the seals of the Admiralty were taken off, and that he might be able nearly to ascertain the amount of his little fortune. His wound was not quite healed. His surgeon, who had been very exact since he had left the hospital, and was in a situation to pay handsomely for his attendance, had strenuously opposed his quitting his room. It is an old proverb—“ What a woman wills, Heaven decrees.” It might,

with equal truth, be said that what my uncle willed, no power in heaven or earth could oppose. He had replied to the physician that no one knew so well as himself the state of his health, that he found himself very well, and that he was resolved to be at the sale. The doctor had already observed that nothing was to be gained by contradicting him; and, besides, by letting him go, he inwardly reckoned upon his having a relapse—and what a rich harvest should he reap if it only lasted six months! A Doctor of any repute at Dunkirk receives twelve sous for every visit; and supposing him to make two every day for two hundred and forty-eight days and a half, what an immense sum that would amount to!

My uncle's comrades for the first time since their arrival at Dunkirk, had quitted their ale-house. They had passed fifteen days at table, or under the table, utter strangers to every thing that was transacting without their happy retreat. They knew nothing of the accident that had happened to their Captain, and had not heard a syllable of the adventure of the laced coat. The paleness of his countenance, and the bandages with which his body was wrapped, gave rise to explanations and felicitations, which occupied the time till the arrival of the worthy gentlemen of the Admiralty. They entered the ship, and proceeded to the sale; the cargo consisted of about five thousand pieces of cotton, in good condition, and the ship was far from being a bad one.

During the sale, which lasted two days, and at which my uncle assisted in his coach, he despatched such a number of bottles of warm wine, and his comrades such a quantity of gin, that neither the one or the other knew what was going forward. They however thought they had paid the strictest attention to their own interests—such is the manner in which the greater part of mankind judge

Notwithstanding the negligence of the superintendents of the prize, the knavery of the persons appointed to place the seals, the rapacity of the prize-master, the expense of the proceedings, the fees of the judges of the admiralty, and the pilage of all, my uncle's share amounted to forty-two thousand livres, which were paid upon his giving a receipt to the notary, deducting the amount of the usurer's bond, who took especial care to present it for payment. The enormity of the interest afforded no room for observation; because those who are striving to cheat a man as much as they can, never dispute the demands of each other.

As there is nothing, save nature and youth, which so much tends to the recovery of a sick man, as the possession of a good round sum of money, and a happy disposition to put it to a good use, my uncle, after eight days' enjoyment of it, found himself well enough to dismiss his doctor and nurse; and after having completed his wardrobe, purchased a hat and feather, and a silver-mounted sword, he prepared to leave his room for the more agreeable diversions of the city.

Monsieur de Chalieu had prognosticated that the period of his recovery would be distinguished by some new act of extravagant eccentricity. His exploits at Yarmouth had been published in every journal; and his conduct since his arrival at Dunkirk, had more resembled that of an enemy than a friend. Every thing was to be dreaded from such a guest, and every thing to be gained by getting rid of him. But it is always necessary to proceed with caution towards a brave man, whoever he may be; and he thought the surest mode of preventing my uncle doing any mischief at Dunkirk, was to persuade him to leave the place.

Monsieur de Chalieu, minutely informed of his actions, and even of his plans, which he never

dissembled, repaired to the Chapeau Rouge at the very moment when Thomas was quitting his chamber. He congratulated him upon the recovery of his health, his riches, his good mien, his martial air, and the generous manner with which he had conducted himself towards Lady Fanny. He flattered his vanity with respect to those points in which he was most sensible. It is an old bait ; but it never fails to catch wise men as well as fools. Do not all men exist by flattery ? Even my cook, Pierette, smiles when I tell her she has dressed my dinner to my liking.

You may naturally suppose that my uncle, flattered by the visit of a Mareschal des Camps, who was decorated with a red ribbon, and still more flattered by the obliging terms in which he addressed him, was disposed to consider every proposition that came from him in the most favourable point of view. The adroit Commandant cautiously avoided making any ; he contented himself with observing that it was astonishing a man, like my uncle, should lose his time in a little insignificant town, when he might make a more brilliant figure at Paris, where his services would be properly estimated, and where he could not fail receiving the due reward of them.

Nothing more was necessary to raise the imagination of my uncle. He instantly hired a chaise and purchased a trunk ; he put his clothes in the one, and mounted into the other, after having stored his money, a bottle of rum, and a pair of double-barrelled pistols in the pockets. Behold him now on the road to Saint Omers, enjoying by anticipation the important character he should perform at Paris.

He possessed the means of living tranquil and happy, but he plunged into those scenes which are ever the destruction of both. He was ignorant and unacknowledged in the ways of mankind, yet he

pretended to know every thing—Poor Thomas ! he did not even know that merit prepares its downfall by its own elevation. How many like my Uncle Thomas are there in the world !

CHAP. IV.

My Uncle becomes a great Lord.

HE travelled day and night, paid his guides like a Prince, and in thirty-six hours was at the gate of Saint Martin. When he arrived there, his postilion asked him where he would alight?

“Wherever you please, provided it is at the best hotel.”

Postilions generally receive some gratuity when they take gentlemen to one hotel in preference to another. My uncle’s thought proper to set him down at the Grange Batelière ; and good or bad, that was the inn at which my uncle alighted. Fortunately for him, but unfortunately for his purse, it was worthy a Duke and a chariot and six.

The laced coat, the hat and feather, and seven or eight bags full of gold and silver, procured my uncle at once the highest respect.

“What apartment does Monsieur le Marquis choose?”

“The best.”

“What will he have for his supper?”

“The best of every thing.”

He was introduced to a room, the rent of which was a hundred crowns a month, and a Louis a day for his board.

A formality, of which my uncle had no conception, remained to be performed before he went to bed. The Police of Paris have a way of inquiring of every person, on his arrival at Paris, who he is ; and according to custom, the officer appeared with his register-book under his arm.

"Monsieur le Marquis will be so good as to write his name."

"I never write."

"I will write for him if he pleases."

"Very well, do so."

"What name, please your Lordship?"

"Thomas."

"But what family name?"

Here my uncle was embarrassed ; he bit his lips for a moment—"O ! Thomas, Marquis de la Thomassière. *A-propos*, talking of writing reminds me that I am in want of a clever young man, who can serve me as valet de chambre and secretary. I do not love to trouble myself about my own affairs ; it fatigues my brain."

"I have just such a one, my Lord, as you are in want of."

"Well," said my uncle, while he was getting into bed, "behold me a Marquis beyond all question ! I shall support the dignity as well as I possibly can. After all, I am not the first who has been respected for his money."

Early the next morning a young man was introduced, of an agreeable figure, and a countenance expressive of frankness and gayety. He pleased my uncle at first sight.

"What wages am I to give you?"

"What you please, Monsieur le Marquis."

"That's exactly the way I like to be answered. Remain with me, and I will satisfy you."

The young man made a profound reverence.

"Reach a chair, and sit down by my bed. Nearer than that—nearer yet—no ceremony—I dispense with it altogether. That's well—now attend ; I am no Marquis, otherwise than by the creation of the waiter of the hotel. I am a poor devil, who have had the good fortune to take an English prize, and I wish to enjoy agreeably my share of five thousand pieces of cotton ; but since I am ennobled, I

will remain noble, and will continue to be called Monsieur de la Thomassière by others. To you I shall be Thomas still, because I must have a companion, and I shall esteem you only as long as you are such ; this is one article stipulated. With respect to the manner of supporting the rank of Marquis, and of diverting myself, I will entirely follow your advice, because I confess I know nothing about it. Come, let me hear what you have to say."

The young man was the son of a tipstaff, and had robbed and run away from his father, then enlisted, afterwards deserted, then commenced a serry player, and after that a worse author. From author turned bailiff's follower, from that dancing-master, then police spy, and, as a last resource, a common swindler. He had presented himself to my uncle with the determination of robbing him, and decamping ; but his frankness won his heart, and he confined his intention to assisting him in promoting his whim, and merely cheating him of his money. This was a tolerably honest determination for such a thoroughbred rogue as he was. He addressed himself to my uncle.

"Since Monsieur le Marquis allows me"—

"Thomas—I tell you."

"Since Monsieur Thomas"—

"I will have it plain Thomas."

"Then Thomas insists upon being instructed by me"—

"Certainly."

"Well, then, I will first observe to him that the title of companion gives me the privilege of accompanying him every where."

"That's exactly what I intend."

"You must have a servant to clean the apartment, take care of our linen, brush our clothes, help us to dress, and receive messages in our absence."

“ Well”—

“ You must have a footman in a stylish livery, to send of errands in the morning, and mount behind the carriage.”

“ Well”—

“ You must hire a carriage by the month.”

“ Well”—

“ You must keep a mistress.”

“ I am not fond of women.”

“ You must have the appearance of being fond of them, and attached to their company—it is the fashion.”

“ Ah, but a mistress is very expensive.”

“ But for thirty Louis a month I will procure you a mistress you need not be ashamed of acknowledging.”

“ It will be money very ill laid out, and besides I shall receive no satisfaction from it; however, let me see how you mean to amuse me, for I must be amused?”

“ In the morning we will go in your carriage to the Champs Elysées, or the Bois de Boulogne: we will walk for about an hour.”

“ Well”—

“ We will then breakfast.”

“ Ah, that’s excellent!—Upon a fine large ham, or a round of beef?”

“ We will then return home, and you will dress.”

“ That will be very fatiguing.”

“ We will then go to the English hotel.”

“ What to do?”

“ To play till dinner time.”

“ To play! what, at Hungarian soldiers, like schoolboys?”

“ Fie, no! at Hazard, Faro, or Rouge et Noir.”

“ I don’t know those games.”

“ I will soon teach them to you. It is a very useful science; and if a man is ruined by it, he

has a chance of keeping a bank himself, and ruining others in his turn."

"I don't exactly understand what you mean."

"You will, after you have played a few times."

"Well, what are we to do when we have finished playing?"

"We will then go to dinner."

"That's right; what then?"

"After dinner we will go to the Opera; after the Opera you will sup and pass the night with Madame."

"Madame who?"

"Your mistress."

"What? must I stay all night with her?"

"Yes; otherwise she will think you despise her."

"What does that signify provided I pay her?"

"She would not fail to expose you to the ridicule of the world. She would insinuate.— You understand me?"

"No, upon my soul I do not; but no matter—I will stay all night with my m stress rather than be the subject of ridicule. And what are we to do the next day?"

"O, there is a variety of pleasures! Versailles Fontainbleau, Saint Cloud will afford you new enjoyments, and good inns."

"Excellent!"

"Ah, there's one thing I had forgot."

"What is it?"

"You cannot appear abroad twice in that laced coat."

"No! why it is quite new."

"It smells of the country. You must have two dressing gowns here, and two at your mistress's, four morning dishabilles, five or six complete suits embroidered with silver, or worked in silk. You must have a gold repeating watch, with a handful of trinkets hanging to it, a diamond ring on your little finger, and a gold snuff box."

" I never take snuff—I smoke."

" You must pound some coffee, for a gold snuff box is indispensable ; on the top of it you must have the portrait of a woman you know nothing of ; you will easily purchase such a one set round with brilliants, at la Rue Saint Honoré."

" Ah my friend ! at the rate you are going, my money will not last six months."

" I have only proposed absolute necessaries. What would you have said if I had spoke of a splendid mansion, an expensive establishment, English horses, a pack of hounds, huntsmen, a country villa, a"—

" Say ! why I should send you to the devil!"

" You see then I am moderate ; and you wish to appear at Court"—

" Wish to appear at Court ? Why I mean it. Must not I demand of the King to bestow on me the command of a ship of the line ?"

" In that case I cannot abate a single article. Truly, when a man is eating his last Louis, it is indifferent whether he has enjoyed his fortune six months or six years, just as it is a matter of equal indifference on the day of his death whether he has lived a hundred years or thirty. Besides, if a man is ruined, it is better to be ruined when he is young."

" Certainly, a man has then time to begin the world again. Really I begin to think you are quite in the right. Come, fill your pockets with money, and see the whole affair arranged. Stop, one word more ; it is necessary to think of every thing before one is quite ruined. You shall go to la Rue des Prêtres ; you shall ask for Madame Riboulard, the wife of a Serjeant of Patrole, and bring her to me."

" And what do you mean to do with the woman ?"

" Hear me, my friend, I am not proud, though I am a Marquis ; I candidly acknowledge to you

that that woman is my mother, and I will assist her while I have it in my power."

"But, Sir, it is not the fashion to acknowledge one's poor parents."

"Pray, friend, what's your name?"

"Robin, at your service."

"Well, then, Mr. Robin, the next time you repeat such sort of observations to me, d'ye see, you certainly will go neck and heels out of the window."

"Pardon me, Sir; be not offended at what I only meant in jest; I will instantly go in search of Madame Riboulard, since you will have it so."

Robin went out. My uncle ordered pipes and tobacco, a sausage, and white wine; he ate, he smoked, he drank for three successive hours; and not knowing what to do, planted himself before a window that was open, and began fising all the French and English airs that came into his head.

A young Lord, who lodged immediately below him, and whose nerves were extremely irritable, found himself exceedingly incommoded by the prolonged fising of my uncle. He sent a polite message to request him to be silent. My uncle returned the valet de chambre no sort of answer; he merely altered his position, shrugged up his shoulders, and continued fising.

"Bring me my horn, Germain," said the young Lord, "and let me try if I can't drown the noise of this infernal fifer."

Germain opened the window, presented the instrument, which immediately made the air ring again to the great terror and consternation of all the cats in the neighbourhood. My uncle made haste to shut his window, but in vain; the noise still assailed his ears. He retired to the farther end of his apartment, from thence to a closet, and from that to a back room. He shut all the doors after him; but the shrill discordant tone of the horn still followed him. Twenty times he was on

the point of waiving upon the performer who so terribly annoyed him, and giving him a sound thrashing; but he was fearful of disgracing his nobility, and acting like a blackguard. He rang every bell with violence; three or four waiters came up.

"Go and tell that fellow, who is blowing his horn below stairs, that he distracts my brain, and that I advise him to make an end of his concerto."

The waiters delivered the message precisely in the terms they had received it.

Monsieur le Comte phlegmatically replied—"Every man is master of his own castle," and began anew to sound his horn.

My uncle knew that a Marquis ought to resent an injury by his sword; but he had heard say that he should get the laugh on his side by answering an insolent message by a *jeu d'esprit*. He soon imagined one. He ordered three water-carriers to be sent to him.

"Here are three livres, my friends; leave your buckets with me, and return again in an hour."

He proceeded to his antichamber, took the handle of a long hair broom, and fastened to one end of it the cord of his trunk; at the extremity of the cord he twisted a large black pin, and placed the remains of his sausage on the point. He then emptied the six buckets on the floor, seated himself on his bed with an air of most undisturbed serenity, with the broomstick in his hand.

Monsieur le Comte still sounded his horn. The water soon filtrated through the ceiling; and a few drops falling on his powdered head, made him quit the instrument, and direct his attention to other objects. He soon perceived the artificial rain became more violent, till at length it was converted into a heavy shower, and in five minutes it rivalled the cascade of Saint Cloud.

The Count, quite astonished at this sudden inundation, immediately assisted his valet, Germain,

in gathering together his gayest habiliments, which were arranged on the different chairs to air. Wet to the skin he seized in haste a waistcoat of one sort, a coat of another, and a pair of breeches different from both ; he put on a hat ornamented with a large feather ; under one arm he secured his best English sword, and under the other his dressing-gown ornamented with silver ; and he ran from place to place to avoid the effects of a torrent which extended to every part of the room. Furious, and not knowing what to do, he determined upon throwing every thing out of the window ; after which he proceeded up to my uncle's apartment, to explore the cause of this strange event.

He found him in the same position.—“ It is very extraordinary, Monsieur le Marquis, very inconceivable that a man of quality should”——

“ Sir, every man is master of his own castle ; you choose to play upon your horn, and I choose to amuse myself with fishing.”

“ Monsieur le Marquis,” resumed the master of the hotel, whom Germain had informed of the affair, “ certainly every man is master of his castle, but only upon certain conditions. I have not granted you the right of fishing in my domains, and you will do well to avoid that amusement in future. Only take the trouble to go down stairs, and see in what a state you have placed all my moveables.

He might just as well have talked to a stone wall. My uncle kept his eyes constantly fixed upon his line, and did not seem to observe that any one was near him. All on a sudden the line was rapidly dragged towards different parts of the room. Thomas, astonished at the phænomenon, pulled with all his might, and drew it up. What do you think it was ? Perhaps a trout, a salmon, or a carp ? No, it was a rat, which, somehow or other, had found its way into one of the water-buckets,

and had been attracted by the agreeable odour of the sausage. At the sight of the animal, my uncle burst into a loud fit of laughter. The impulse was communicated to the Count, from the Count to the host, and from the host to the valet. This incident put an end to all animosity.

When their mirth had exhausted itself in reiterated convulsions, it was good-humouredly settled between the parties that the Count should renounce his horn, Thomas his fishing-rod, and that the latter should make good the damage, if any should appear to have been sustained after the moveables were dry.

This history soon ran through the whole hotel; it extended to those in the neighbourhood; from them it found its way to the Boulevards, the Marais, and the Fauxbourgs de Saint Jacques. The Gazette of France, usually filled only with presentations and court news, did not disdain to publish a full and particular account of it. It was made into ballads, and sung on the Pont Neuf; (the Théâtre du Vaudeville did not then exist.) In short, for four-and-twenty hours all Paris was occupied with my uncle and his strange adventure.

Tranquillity was scarce established when Robin made his appearance with a numerous train of followers. He wished to seem to leave my uncle the pleasure of making that choice which he was certain of influencing; and he had previously arranged matters with the vendors, who had agreed to allow him a fair profit.

The procession consisted of taylors, jewellers, lackeys, job-coachmasters, linen drapers, and tradesmen of every description, laden with patterns for the choice of my uncle. Lastly appeared a young girl of about fifteen years, rather meanly clad, but withal tolerably pretty, whom Robin had found some difficulty in procuring. Much as my uncle was averse to women, he could not avoid a certain de-

gree of interest at the object now before him. The sex can never entirely lose its rights. He demanded who she was.

"She is your sister," whispered Robin.

"My sister!" resumed my uncle, in a loud tone of voice; "I did not know I had one; but since it is so, reach her a chair. Let the rest, who come only to cheat me of my money, wait without with all due respect."

He conversed a long time with Mademoiselle Suzanne, whom he did not know for the following reasons: first, because Rosalia had sent her to the country, and left her three years at nurse; secondly, because she had passed four more at l'Hopital d'Etampes, where her nurse, who never received a single farthing from her parents, on her account, had placed her; thirdly, because Thomas had left his maternal dwelling when very young; and, lastly, because the young lady, whom Rosalia was determined should not be brought up to her own profession, had been taken from the Hospital, and placed with a mantua-maker, to whom old Riboulard would not give any apprentice-fee, and who, on that account, had been articled to labour for twelve years *gratis*.

She informed her brother, the Marquis, of the death of their mother, of Riboulard's taking possession of all her money and moveables, and of his electing himself the sole guardian of her daughter, who consequently was in want of every thing, and never failed to receive a box or two on the ear if she presumed to demand the smallest pecuniary assistance from him.

"Suzanne," said my uncle, "return to the mantua-maker; tell her that Monsieur de la Thomassière desires to speak with her this moment, and make her come with you. Go, my child; you shall be perfectly satisfied with my conduct towards you."

" Ah Sir !" replied a young man of about twenty years of age, " she has not told you all ; her mistress teaches her nothing, but treats her like a servant, and almost starves her."

" Is that true, Suzanne ?"

" I did not dare to tell you."

" Remain where you are, and let the mantua-maker go to the devil."

" But I have engaged myself to serve her."

" Well, let her come and claim you ; she shall see how I dispose of such engagements. But tell me, who is this genteel young man who has taken your part ?"

" He is my sweetheart, brother."

" He is your sweetheart ! What, is he courting you to make you his wife, or any thing else ?"

" We would marry if it was in our power ; it is our mutual wish to do so ; but in the meantime"—

" What in the meantime ?"

" He assists me out of his savings."

" The devil ! He is an honest fellow, then."

" O yes ! a very good young man."

" What business is he ?"

" A clerk at the Hospital des Innocens."

" Well that's an honourable industrious employment. Approach, young man ; I am told you wish to be my brother-in-law."

" Ah Sir ! if I dared"—

" Will you be my brother-in-law ?"

" If I was worthy to aspire"—

" Say yes or no ; will you be my brother-in-law ?"

" Yes, doubtless, Sir."

" Well then it is an affair agreed upon."

" But we must have the consent of her parents and mine."

" What's the use of their consent ? It is not they who are to be married, but you and my sister. I

am to pay the dowry, and my consent alone is necessary ; therefore let your parents consent or not, married you shall be. However, Robin, go to Riboulard's house ; tell him I am returned from England, and that I am eleven inches taller than when I so soundly drubbed him. Tell him I pardon his conduct towards Suzanne and myself, on condition that he immediately delivers up the remainder of our mother's property. Tell the other father that I will give his son four thousand franks, to open a new shop, and enable him to begin housekeeping ; and do you strictly prohibit either of them from interfering in the affair."

" But, Sir, you forget"—

" What ?"

" That there are ten persons waiting without."

" Agree with them for what we shall want ; pay them, and let them leave me to my repose. Tell me, my brother-in-law, what is your name ?"

" It is Vernier, Sir."

" It's a very good name. Come, Vernier, here are twenty-five Louis for you. Buy proper apparel for your wife ; for truly at present she is hardly fit to be touched with a pair of tongs ; and mind, conduct yourselves with decorum. You will both return and dine with me."

Little Suzanne took hold of her lover's arm, and they retired laughing, embracing, dancing, and singing.

My uncle, left alone, and fatigued with the many fine things he had conceived and said in the course of the day, moistened his mouth with a second bottle of white wine ; he afterwards took his sword and hat and feather, and walked for two hours on the Boulevards.

At the appearance of such a strange uncouth figure, the women could not restrain their admiration or the men their laughter. The coaches were obliged to draw on one side, because he had taken possession of the middle of the highway, nor

could any thing induce him to move to the right or the left.

When he returned to his hotel, he found a man of very mean appearance waiting for him in the court-yard, because his exterior had interdicted his admission to the apartments. He had worn-out shoes, darned stockings, a coat that some few years before had been black, a tie-wig that seemed as if it had been made in Noah's time, and the half of a hat under his arm. He bowed about twenty times as he approached my uncle, who abruptly asked him what he wanted?

"I am Vernier's father."

"Well, what's that to me?"

"I am come"—

"What, to oppose the marriage?"

"No; to give my consent to it, to return my thanks, and"—

"To beg for a wedding gift, I suppose? Well, here are twenty crowns; go, dress yourself a little better, and let me see no more of you."

The poor man retired, wiping a tear which had been produced by the humiliating treatment he had received. My uncle observed him lift an old snuff coloured handkerchief to his eyes, and he felt a certain emotion.

"Come back, old black coat; after all, you are going to be Suzanne's father-in-law. I was to blame to affront you, and I beg your pardon. Come in, my brave fellow; you shall make one amongst us at dinner. Well, Robin, what says old Riboulard?"

"He has given me this paper."

"Read it."

It was the Serjeant's consent, drawn up in proper form; but it was on the express condition he should enjoy his late wife's property during his life, and that he should give no other dowry with Suzanne than his blessing.

" Ah, the old rascal ! he has escaped for five or six years. I perceive clearly he must be made an end of, and I will immediately set about it."

" But, Sir"—said Robin.

" I will cudgel him to death !"

" What ! kill a man in cool blood ?"

" Cool blood ! Why, I am in a passion !"

" A defenceless old man !"

" Old ! he is not above fifty."

" Shall you, who have conquered by sea and land, sully your glory by such an action ?"

" You are jesting with me, surely ; what's the advantage of power, if one cannot abuse it according as passion or interest dictates ?"

" The process of the law," said old Vernier, " is a more easy and certain method."

" Are you an attorney ?"

" I am only a clerk, Sir ; but I understand these affairs."

" Since you understand them, finish this in the course of four-and-twenty hours."

" Ah Sir ! you don't consider what it is you require. You must first serve him with a citation to appear, and then another summons for the next Court day ; you must be content to have your cause deferred three or four times, at least ; and at length, after having gained it, be subject to an appeal to Parliament."

" What, then, it may last till Riboulard's death ? Come, I will terminate this process in the twinkling of an eye."

" But reflect, Sir, that he is the father of your sister."

" How can such a fellow as Riboulard deserve the title of father ?"

" But, Sir"—

" No more reasons, Master Robin ; give me my new fishing-rod, and let me be gone."

In fact, he was just setting out, armed with a stick eight feet long, when his little sister returned with her lover. She appeared so extremely pretty with her round straw bonnet and red ribbon, her yellow shoes, and elegant dress, that my uncle stopped a moment to admire her. It was not nature embellished by art, but nature divested of the unwholesome weeds which prevented the display of her native beauty.

Suzanne, informed in two words by Robin of what Thomas was meditating, addressed him in so tender and persuasive a manner, she wept with such a good grace, and embraced him so *a-tropos*, that my uncle threw away his fishingrod, and sat himself down at the table with the company.

The marriage, except by a dispensation of banns, could not take place in less than ten days, to the great discontent of my uncle, who would have had it concluded that same evening. As he could not do any thing better, he determined that Suzanne, who had no other asylum, should lodge at the hotel; that young Vernier should have his meals there till his marriage, as well as his father when he was invited. They ate hearty, drank heartier, laughed, and sung. Suzanne talked at random of the Opera, which she had never seen and she spoke with enthusiasm. Nothing appears so delightful as that with which we are unacquainted. Thomas, who was really attached to her, promised to take her there in the evening. Suzanne seemed overjoyed, and smiled at the idea of going to the Opera; and Vernier whispered that he would be in the pit.

"But, Sir," replied Robin, who found his plans deranged, "the lady will be at the Italian Theatre."

"Well, let the lady come to me at the Opera."

"What lady?" pursued Suzanne.

"Only a hired lady Robin has procured for me. I am to pay extravagantly for her, and yet she ima-

gines I am to run after her. No, let her earn her wages, and run after me."

"But, Sir——" said Robin.

"Well, what further have you to say?"

"Why, Sir, Mademoiselle, handsome as she is, cannot appear in the side boxes in a dishabille."

"Why not? Is she not my sister? Will she not have paid for her place? Shall I not be with her? Who will dare to make the least objection to her being there?"

"Mademoiselle," interrupted young Vernier, "is not rich; her habits are simple, but proper and becoming; and she ought only to blush when she assumes an appearance beyond her station in life."

"Bravo, brother-in-law! you are a sensible lad, and I perceive that I shall always be your friend. Come, Robin, bring coffee, liquor, brandy, pipes, and tobacco."

While my uncle was smoking, old Vernier sleeping with his head on the table, and the young couple enjoying themselves in mutual and innocent dalliance at the window, the tradesmen made their appearance, and arranged themselves rank and file. In the short period of six hours, they had prepared every thing necessary to form the exterior of a man of importance; and when my uncle was decked in a splendid suit, embroidered with silver down the seams, he resembled in every respect the rest of our men of quality, whose merit consists in their outside.

The amount of all the bills presented to him was about ten thousand francs, out of which the modest Robin did not gain more than fifty Louis. My uncle made him read the articles, and could not avoid finding fault with the enormity of some of them; but his *factotum*, deeply versed in the knowledge of the human heart, stopped his mouth by a flattering compliment, which Thomas did not expect. He presented him a golden pipe, in

a splendid case of the same metal, on which was engraved a representation of the castle he had forced, and in the back ground the ship he had boarded from his pinnace. Monsieur le Marquis threw his arms round Robin's neck, embraced him most cordially, and made no more objections to the price of the articles.

My uncle, enchanted with his golden pipe, filled and emptied it two or three times; after which he presented one hand, decorated with a white glove, to Suzanne; with the other he lifted up the left flap of his silver embroidered coat, and traversed the court-yard with his sister; at the same time assuming all the airs of quality his memory furnished him with. At last he handed her to his carriage, and emphatically ordered his coachman to drive to the Opera.

Robin, who always had his thoughts about him, had taken his measures accordingly. He had informed the lady that Monsieur le Marquis would not go to the Italian Theatre; and that if she wished to advance her affairs with such a man as my uncle was, it was necessary to give way to his humours. He had come from her to the Opera, and engaged a small box, certain that Suzanne would leave it before her brother, the Marquis. It was his intention to prevent her being seen by the spectators, if possible; he, however, at all events, reckoned upon concealing the defects of her dress, by throwing over her shoulders a rich black cloak, with which he had taken care to provide himself. What a charming fellow Robin would have been, if he had but been possessed of honesty! But, alas! a man cannot possess every qualification; and now-a-days the want of honesty is hardly considered as a defect.

The carriage arrived, and the new lackey opened the door; Robin presented his hand to the Mar-

quis and his sister. The varlet had got on a coat of coloured velvet.

"Ah, ah, Master Robin! I see you have not forgot yourself," cried my uncle.

"Faith, Sir you have elevated me to the rank of your companion; and if I am far your inferior in merit, I wish in some degree to be your equal in point of dress."

"'Tis well. Much good may your velvet coat do you! Walk before, and show us the way."

"What devil of a box is that you have taken?"

"It was the only one I could get."

"How the deuce do you suppose I can display my fine clothes in such a narrow confined place as this is?"

"You may seat yourself in front."

"What, slave! and let my sister sit behind? Do you take her for my servant? There, Mademoiselle; do you sit in the front. Robin, take your place behind her, and I will display my embroidered coat as well as I can."

Robin hastened to draw from his pocket the black cloak, which he presented with the most graceful air imaginable.

"I thank you for your attention," said my uncle, "but Mademoiselle shall not wear it. Cloaks are of no use but to hide a bad shape; and I wish my sister to appear with all the advantages Nature has bestowed upon her."

"But, Sir"—

"Peace, I say!"

"Allow me"—

"Peace, peace, I say!"

Robin thought it most prudent to be silent, lest my uncle should exhibit a scene in his box, which might probably have the effect of interrupting the one about to commence.

It is constantly the business of the pit, before the curtain draws up, to examine the women in the

boxes. When Suzanne, formed like the Graces, and beautiful as the Loves, appeared in front of her's, a general murmur of approbation was heard. She blushed, and cast down her eyes. Her beauty had been admired, but her modesty was applauded. Every hand clapped at the same moment; and no one perceived that the object of admiration was distinguished by a straw bonnet and a dishabille. Robin's fears were dissipated in an instant; and my uncle, leaning over the box, exclaimed, with a loud voice—

"She is my sister, my friends! Is not she a lovely girl?"

Unfortunately, this expressive apostrophe was lost amidst the plaudits.

The scene commenced. Suzanne, who had no idea of the Opera, was all eyes and ears. My uncle's attention was divided between Armide and Suzanne. Robin explored every door that was opened, in expectation of the arrival of the lady. At the end of the third act he perceived her enter, attired in the most bewitching undress. He instantly informed my uncle of her arrival, and offered to introduce him to her.

As they were proceeding to her box, he instructed the Marquis as to the manner in which he was to present himself, in order to conform to established custom. He dictated the terms of the compliment he was to address to her. My uncle did not listen to a word he said, but strutted along, humming a tune. Robin, humbled at the little attention paid to his advice, bit his lips, introduced my uncle to the lady, and retired.

My uncle knew not how to make compliments—he knew still less how to make love. He seated himself without any ceremony, by the side of the lady, who, on her part, was eyeing him through her fan. He chuckled her under the chin, desired her to hold up her head, and stared in her face.

He took off her gloves, examined her hands, and cast a side glance at her neck, which was nearly uncovered.

"Now let me look at your leg."

"How, Sir! is the first word you address to me an insult?"

"What! do I insult you because I wish to examine my property? Come, let me see your leg!"

"Sir, you are really extremely rude and vulgar."

"I have engaged to pay you, and not to be polite; you have engaged, on your part, to submit to my fancies. I am very well satisfied as far as I have seen, now satisfy my curiosity further?"

"What a horrible manner of making love!"

"I do not love you, nor shall I ever love you. I take you because a Marquis must have a mistress, and I wish to know what I have taken."

"What, at the Opera? In a box? You young Lords are so impetuous, so tyrannical, there's no doing any thing with you," said she, affecting an air of modesty, and at the same time playing off a long string of fine words, the effect of which appeared admirable, for my uncle listened attentively, and had ceased both to speak or to act.

It was not the fine words that operated upon the reason of my uncle. His attention was distracted by certain far-traced recollections and confused ideas. He again chuckled her under the chin, and made her hold up her head; then patting her cheeks, he exclaimed—

"Ah! it is you, my pretty Louisa?"

"My name is Armenia, Sir."

"Come, come, no jesting; surely you cannot have forgot the Cordeliers of la Rue des Prêtres, or the little devil, or the Recruiting Officer, or the ten crowns you gave to the fifer, who was enlisted at your house."

Louisa regarded my uncle in her turn ; she retraced the first features of his infancy ; she congratulated him upon the fortunate change in his situation. Exclamations, grateful effusions, transports, felicitations—all were reciprocally lavished ; matters did not end there.

“ Ah ! tell me how you have become a Marquis ?”

“ Just as you became a lady of quality.”

“ But are you only so in your outward appearance ?”

“ I am no more a Marquis than you are a modest woman.”

“ Well, never mind, I am very happy to see you again.”

“ And so am I ; and since I must have a mistress, I would have you rather than another. I thought you very handsome formerly—you are not amiss now.”

In fact, Louisa was only twenty-six years of age, and had lost but few of her charms. It is true, she was a little indebted to Art, but she was every way worthy a chance-created Marquis. She had descended from her more elevated sphere of life, because the kept-mistresses of Noblemen have but one moment in which an opportunity offers of making their fortune. Louisa had neglected to seize it ; and she thought herself fortunate when Robin, who was himself wearied of her, procured her customers, the profits of which she shared with him.

Thomas, to whom love was quite a new passion, experienced certain emotions of curiosity. He no longer listened to the complaints or the despair of Armide. His vivacity did not accord with the pompous demeanour requisite on the stage, nor could his character bear the delay of the scene. He proposed to Louisa to take the air, and ordered Robin to reconduct his sister to the hotel, and

to treat her with the same respect as himself. He then mounted the first coach he found with his fair one.

Madame Armenia, who had depended upon having a provincial Lord to pluck, had disposed every thing in style, in order to impress him with a favourable idea of her manner of living. Her room, the only one she had, was entirely cleaned, her chairs dusted, her plated candlesticks furbished up, and adorned with wax-lights; her maid had spread a white table-cloth, and the tavern-keeper, at the corner of the street, had prepared a very nice supper, which had been paid for beforehand with the money furnished by Robin.

"Do you know," said my uncle, as he entered, "that you have not the appearance of an Ambassador's widow? This is but a paltry sort of a room."

"It is very true, my friend; but you will provide me a more convenient lodging."

"Hah!"

"You will pay my debts."

"Indeed!"

"You will advance me six months' allowance?"

"Depend upon it."

"And I will be true to you."

"As true as you were to your Ambassador."

"Ah, my dear friend! how can you have such a thought?—You will kill me if you mention it again."

"That's your business, not mine. Come, no more talking—let us have supper."

It consisted of tarts, fruits, confectionary, ices, and wine.

"What!" said my uncle, "do you begin supper by serving up the dessert?"

"My dear friend, it is a supper fit for a Lord—it is an *ambigu*."

"Very likely; but I want a supper fit for a sailor."

"Aye, but when a person eats too heartily at supper"—

"He sleeps the sounder."

"Do you reckon upon sleeping, then?"

"S'death! what do I go to bed for but to sleep?"

"I see, my friend, you are quite a novice."

"I cannot retort the same reproach upon you."

This smart repartee may convince you that my uncle, among his other talents, was sometimes a wit.

While he was devouring a plate full of ham and beef he had desired to be sent for, and was indulging in frequent libations of good old Burgundy, the operation of which was increased by the caresses and allurements of Louisa, his passions were suddenly aroused. He determined upon satisfying himself whether that of love was worth the troubles and follies into which the greater part of mankind rushed for the sake of gratifying it. The result was far from answering his expectations; and addressing Louisa, he said—

"Behold me now satisfied for the rest of my life!"

"What do you mean, Sir?"

"I mean to go home."

"Really, Sir, this is the first time I ever was so affronted in the whole course of my life."

"Well, every thing must have a beginning."

My uncle already had seized his hat and sword, and was opening the door.

Armenia, who saw her prey on the point of escaping her, had immediate recourse to an affectation of despair. It is a woman's war-horse upon all grand occasions. She cried, sighed, tore her hair, and took up a knife to pierce her bosom. Thomas did not interrupt or attempt to restrain her; on the contrary, he stood with all imaginable composure, laughing at her. Rendered furious by his indifference, she soon assumed her native

character, and convinced him she was still Louisa. She stormed, swore, seized him by the collar, and insisted he should pay for the supper, and a month's salary. My uncle maintained he had earned his supper; but that he had promised the salary, and would perform his promise.

"Let me see," said he, "thirty Louis a month make twenty-four livres a day—twenty-four livres a day come to twenty sous an hour—I have been two hours and a half with you, here are six franks, give me the change."

Was there ever a lady paid by such arguments as these before? Louisa answered them by indenting her nails in the visage of the ingenious calculator. The Marquis, furious in his turn, took her under his arm, gave her a few hearty slaps, threw her on her bed, seized the maid by the ear, and obliged her to light him politely to the street door. He was forced to proceed to his hotel on foot, because at one o'clock in the morning there are no coaches to be procured.

You may conclude from what I have related, if you deign to reflect at all, that every man has his portion of reason, which never fails to direct him right, if he will but listen to its dictates. My uncle was sensible that a mistress enervated the body, and degraded the soul. A philosopher could not have thought more wisely upon the subject.

CHAP. V.

My Uncle finds a Friend.

ON entering the hotel, the Marquis was astonished to see a light still in his room. He imagined his sister must have been long retired to bed, unless she had been indisposed, or some extraordinary accident had happened to her. He thought that perhaps the supper and wine had operated upon Vernier, and had determined him to anticipate the rights of marriage :—“ In which case,” said my uncle, “ I can have nothing to object, provided Suzanne is agreeable ; though I own I should rather be surprised at it, and it is what I must satisfy myself of. However,” added he, as he proceeded softly on tiptoes, “ what difference does it make whether they begin eight days sooner or later, since they absolutely mean to be married ?”

He gently opened the first door ; he listened at that of the second apartment, and he heard those within earnestly conversing together. He lent an attentive ear, and soon distinguished the voice of Robin.

Monsieur Robin was making love to Suzanne. He was endeavouring to insinuate that her future husband was a fool every way unworthy of her. He inferred that she would make a much better choice by preferring him. He enforced his arguments by taking certain liberties, which Suzanne repressed as well as she was able. Just as my uncle began distinctly to hear him, he was ma-

king a plain downright proposition to her to elope with him, and carry off her brother's cash, whom he said he led by the nose.

The injurious expression had scarcely escaped his lips than Thomas opened the door, and seizing the tongs, made them descend with the rapidity of lightning on the shoulders of Robin, who, to avoid such unexpected discipline, crept under the table, from the table under the chairs, from the chairs under the bed, and from the bed into the middle of the room, where he knelt and begged for mercy. The compassionate Suzanne interceded in his behalf. The Count, who had awaked in a fright, slipped on his dressing-gown, and creeping up stairs, exclaimed—

“ Monsieur le Marquis! are you fishing again?”

“ No, Sir, I am hunting now.”

He afterwards entered into a detail of Robin's treacherous conduct. Robin was silent, Suzanne trembled, and the Count smiled.

Thomas, whom nothing ever diverted from his principal object, ordered Robin, as soon as the Count was gone, to strip off his velvet coat. Robin obeyed. My uncle rummaged the pockets, and Robin protested that the fifty Louis which were in them, were the fruits of his lawful savings. My uncle deposited them in his bureau. Robin insisted, and my uncle swore if he added another word, he would carry him before the next Magistrate, by whom he would certainly be recognised. Robin trembled from head to foot, and my uncle, leading him out of the room, saluted him with a kick on the breech, which sent him flying from the top to the bottom of the staircase.

“ Come, Suzanne, retire to bed; you must needs be in want of repose.”

“ And where will you sleep, brother?”

“ In the bed destined for the varlet I have just kicked out.”

" But you will not be able to sleep comfortably in his bed?"

" Never you mind that."

" But if"—

" If you reason any more, I will lay on this sofa."

" Good night, then, my brother!"

" Good night, my pretty sister! Pray tell me how much does Vernier gain a day by his writing?"

" But three livres and four francs."

" I will allow him twelve francs, and you shall remain with me till all my money is gone. He will neither deceive nor rob me; he will give me good advice, which I shall certainly not follow, but it will not be his fault; and if any thing happens to me, I shall have myself alone to blame."

In effect, Vernier was the very next day installed in his new office at the hotel; and such is the ascendancy of honesty, that he frankly expressed his thoughts to my uncle without ever once offending him. He at first represented to him that it was ridiculous to pass for a Marquis. Thomas answered that he had received the title from one of the waiters. Vernier added that it was still more ridiculous to launch into an extravagant style of living, which it was impossible for him long to support. Thomas replied that it was the only method by which he could make himself of consequence. Vernier terminated his observations by saying that with what my uncle still possessed he might learn and follow a lucrative profession, which would ensure him an honourable independence. My uncle protested there was no trade so good as that of a privateer. It was one he was perfectly acquainted with, and by following it he could easily enrich and ruin himself once a year, which was infinitely preferable to a sedentary and uniform kind of life.

Vernier, however, persuaded him to dismiss one of his domestics, and quit his apartments of a hundred crowns a month. This reform was immediately carried into execution, to the great satisfaction of Suzanne. But her caresses, and the sage reflections of Vernier, could not determine him to give up his coach, his embroidered clothes, or his jewels. He drove through every corner of Paris for the pleasure of being seen, and he expressly ordered his coachman to have the wheels constantly in the kennel.

"I have been pretty well bespattered," said he; "it is but just that I should bespatter others in my turn."

On the same day he would visit the Chateau of Versailles, where no one paid any attention to him, the Machine of Marly, which he knew nothing about, take a dish of turtle soup at la Grénoillière, walk in the Thuilleries, yawn in the rooms of the King's Library, and in the Cabinets of Natural History present his hand to every lady going up or down stairs—shut himself up in a mean alehouse to smoke one or two pipes, dine as if he had had no breakfast, go to the play and fall fast asleep, then come home and get as drunk as a parson, because, as he used to say, he played the Marquis all day to please others, and it was but just he should at least have the evening to please himself.

At the end of eight days he was quite tired of his Marquisate, but he was ashamed to confess it. Vernier soon perceived it; and he hoped to owe to his disgust what had been refused to his judgment. Suzanne and himself concerted measures upon the subject; and when Thomas thought them occupied with their mutual passion they were considering how they might be of service to him.

"I must try something new," said the Marquis to his future brother-in-law.

" That varlet, Robin, mentioned the English Hotel to me ; let me take some money and see if I can amuse myself at play."

Vernier represented to him that nothing proposed by Robin could be either good or honourable ; that gaming was a base passion, which inflamed the head, and corrupted the heart ; and that a gentleman who had the weakness to frequent a house where it was carried on, should blush at the idea of being discovered and known.

" No one will know me there ; besides, I am not over nice ; nothing can make me blush. Let us go ; I am determined to play."

The assembly was brilliant.

" You see," said my uncle, " there are a great number of gentlemen here."

" You will know more of them presently."

" Remark those piles of gold before the keeper of the Bank."

" They are baits to catch fools."

" Monsieur le Marquis," said a well-dressed man to my uncle, " lend me a Louis—I have not yet dined."

" How do you know I am a Marquis ?"

" Is it possible to be deceived with regard to one of your distinguished figure and appearance ? Lend me a Louis—I will give it you to-morrow."

" Here are two, my friend ; go and dine, and a good appetite to you !"

" Do you know that gentleman ?" resumed Vernier.

" No, but he is an agreeable, well-bred man, and has said some handsome things to me ; and besides, he told me he had not dined."

" That's the only truth he did tell you. He is a sharper who perceived you were a stranger, and he is now gone to laugh at you, while he is dining at your expense."

" You contradict me in every thing I do."

" You have given me permission to do so."

" Yes, but you abuse that permission."

Vernier was silent.

My uncle observed the game for some time, and soon comprehended it. He drew forth a few Louis, which he lost, gained, and lost again. His brain became heated ; by degrees he played for whole handfuls of gold, and emptied his pockets in an instant. Then turning to Vernier, he told him to go and get him some money. Vernier went out, but did not return. My uncle, fatigued with waiting, walked hastily up and down the room ; he stamped and stormed ; every one was busy, and he was not attended to. A waiter, with marked cards in his hand, and pins on his sleeve, came up to him, and tapped him on the shoulder,

" What, have you lost your money ?"

" Have you any to lend ?"

" Yes, if you have any thing to pledge."

" S'death ! here's my watch, my ring, my gold box !"

" Come then, follow me."

Thus saying, the waiter conducted my uncle to a little cabinet.

Thomas drew out his watch, and pulled off his ring. He felt in vain for his snuff-box—it was stolen. He made an infernal uproar. He swore he would have every pocket in the room searched ; and that if he did not find it, he would make the bank reimburse him for his loss.

He was proceeding to put his threats in execution, but the door by which he had entered the cabinet was locked, and the waiter had disappeared. He endeavoured to force it open—it was of oak, and three inches thick. At the redoubled blows of my uncle, a little grated wicket was opened,

and a person on the other side phlegmatically observed—

“ No noisy fellows are admitted here.”

“ Aye, but this ~~is~~ and pickpockets are !”

The wicket instantly closed, and my uncle began to swear; but as he found it was of no use, he descended a private stair-case he perceived before him, and came to that by which he had at first entered. He proceeded up to the door, and knocked, determined to recover his snuff-box cost what it would. He found himself opposed by another oak door, another wicket, and the same phlegmatic harangue. My uncle went away, striking his forehead. He threw himself into the carriage, and arrived at his hotel in a tremendous passion, swearing and blaspheming to the great terror of the whole place.

“ *Sacré Dieu!* Monsieur Vernier, is it thus you conduct yourself? You left me standing there like an empty bottle, instead of bringing me money.”

“ You would have lost it, Sir !”

“ Well, was it not my own ?”

“ Certainly, Sir; you may throw your money out of the window if you please, but I am not bound to assist you.”

This frank answer of Vernier did not fail making an impression on Thomas. At first he regarded him with an air of tranquillity; the instant after, his figure seemed agitated—he alternately reddened and turned pale. At length he threw himself into his arms.

“ Yes, by Heavens! you are a fine fellow. I have said it, and I repeat it, you shall be always my friend.”

A profound calm succeeded this tempest. Suzanne mingled in the conversation a few words, inspired by the sincere interest she felt in whatever concerned him. My uncle, over whom Ver-

nier had gained a sort of ascendancy, listened with the utmost deference. He was quite absorbed in thought, thrust his hands in his pockets, and drew out a paper which he did not recollect having ever put in. He asked Vernier what it was. Vernier read these words—“*A man who does not take snuff, has no occasion for a snuff-box.*”

“I believe,” said my uncle, “the pickpocket has been making a jest of me.”

“Others will make a jest of you too, Sir; depend upon it, it is ever the case with those who conduct themselves as you have done, without discernment.”

“Do you know, Vernier, that I was not amused at all at that place?”

“I believe it.”

“I had a volcano in my head. However it is no matter. I am now cured of women and gambling. After every thing is done and said, there is but one real pleasure—it is that of the table.”

“Come, Sir, let us have supper.”

“Drink!”

After supper my uncle lighted his gold pipe, and took a turn to his bureau. He counted his cash while he was smoking. It had sensibly diminished, and from time to time he shook his head.

“After all,” said he, “money is only made to spend. Come hither, Vernier; you are to be married to-morrow, and I cannot answer for the follies I may commit in the course of the day, therefore take it all. Here are the four thousand livres, I promised you, and four thousand more for Suzanne.”

“I will not take them, Sir.”

“Why not?”

“Because with half the sum, and our honest industry, we may live comfortably.”

“But, my friend, surely I may be allowed to serve my sister.”

“She thinks as I do.”

" How the devil have you learned such fine sentiments ? Really, two such as you and my sister are not often to be met with. Attend, Suzanne ; I may game a second and a third time, and but for the advice of my brother-in-law, I should already have done so—those rascals would have won much more than I now offer, and which I think so well bestowed. Do not refuse me, my sweet sister, do not give pain to your brother Thomas."

Suzanne and Vernier still refused the generous gift.

" Take it," exclaimed my uncle, " or I will return to the English Hotel, and then you know, my friends, a soldier is not always fortunate. I may have need of you, and you may assist me in your turn."

These last reasons overcame the delicacy of Vernier. His future bride and himself tenderly embraced my uncle, who immediately set about the preparations for the approaching wedding.

He was determined it should be splendid. He resolved to have four services, and the table decorated with wax-lights ; that there should be a band of music in the antichamber ; and that, for want of friends and acquaintances, they should invite the first they met in the street. After dinner he wished to have a ball, and a side table magnificently garnished with every delicacy. After that he wished —what the devil was it he did not wish ?

Vernier declared that all this splendour appeared to him useless and misplaced ; that it would only prove his vanity to guests he did not know, and would not render justice to his own heart. Thomas maintained that he could not marry his sister without suitable pomp, and that he would not abate a single tittle. Vernier promised him to prepare every thing in the morning.

When the wished-for morning arrived, my uncle bedecked himself in his gayest apparel. Su-

zanne did the same. She was adorned in the simple dishabille which rendered her figure so interesting at the Opera.

"How is it, my good brother-in-law, you have not procured a proper full dress to be married in?"

"Behold, Sir, she has the fairest ornament a married woman who is worthy to wear it can have."

At the same time he showed Thomas the white flower tied behind Suzanne's bonnet.

"Nonsense!" said my uncle, "you would not have my sister dressed on her wedding-day like a mantua-maker."

"But, Sir, you know she is one, and that therefore her dress is suitable to her character."

"Now that's what enrages me ; your cursed observations are always so well applied. But at least I hope that you will throw off your gray frock, and put on this laced one which I have never yet worn."

"No, Sir?"

"And why not, Sir?"

"I will not put on a coat to-day, which it would not become me to wear to-morrow."

"Then go to the devil both of you together, and marry yourselves as you like."

Old Vernier arrived. He had expended my uncle's money at a sale-shop for second-hand clothes, and got most gallantly arrayed. He was accompanied by an old Serjeant of Marine, and the head-waiter at la Buvette du Chatelet. My uncle demanded what these two last wanted. He answered he had invited them, as old friends of the family, to be witnesses of the marriage. He took the Serjeant by the hand, and asked him if he had ever been at the wars. The Serjeant replied he had served in thirteen campaigns.

" By land?"

" Aye, and by sea too."

" Then you are my man ; you shall set by my side, and we will talk together."

They set out for the Church ; my uncle, his sister, father Vernier, and the Serjeant, in the carriage ; and the bridegroom and the waiter in a hackney coach. On the road, and during the ceremony, the former commenced the history of their campaigns. The Serjeant was a brave man ; he related his adventures with warmth, and my uncle listened with pleasure. He interrupted him, however, at the moment the Priest joined the hands of the young couple.—The modest, satisfied air of both the bride and bridegroom, the awfulness of the ceremony itself when it consecrates the desires of the heart, the simple and interesting exhortation of the Priest, overcame the sensibility of Thomas, and drew a tear from his eye, which he hastened to wipe away, at the same time turning his head : he would not for the world the Serjeant should have seen him weep.

On their return in the carriage, he began the recital of his exploits ; he continued when they alighted, and finished during breakfast. Then they prolonged the time with dissertations upon the military art, the faults of Generals, the surest method of ameliorating our Marine, and humbling England ; reflections on the folly of Ministers in rewarding intrigue, and neglecting merit. These topics so occupied the Serjeant, and my uncle, that the dinner hour surprised them before they were aware of it. They were informed it was upon the table.

On entering the dining-room, Thomas indulged himself in grimaces, and manifested symptoms of indignation sufficient to have terrified a whole ship's crew. He observed that the common dining-table was spread, and that the dinner consisted only of two courses of six covers, besides soup. Vernier

waited till his rage had exhausted itself. Its effects were terrible, but, like a wise man, he suffered him to take his course, and did not reply a single word.

When my uncle had finished, Vernier, addressing him, said—“ What, Sir, is it you wish for ? Is it to do honour to your sister’s wedding ? She will find herself amply honoured in the enjoyment of your friendship. Is it to amuse yourself ? I have procured you the company of a man who will not allow you to count the moments. Is it to make a good meal ? There is twice as much provided as will be necessary. Is it to enjoy the freedom of conversation ? It is with real friends alone we can unbosom our thoughts, and not in the midst of a crowd of strangers, whose presence would have been a restraint upon us. You see, Sir, I have fulfilled all your wishes, and that I have laid out the hundred Louis to the best advantage : really I do not see any reason for your putting yourself into such a rage.”

My uncle drew the Serjeant aside. “ Do not imagine that this man entirely directs me—’s death ! I am the master, and will always be obeyed ; but I am reasonable, and when he is not in the wrong, I must yield to him. Come, let us sit down to dinner.”

Every thing Vernier had foreseen, came to pass. When Thomas was not engaged with the Serjeant on the subject of war, he talked with the waiter on the subject of wine ; when he had nothing to say to either, he looked with admiration at his sister, and inwardly congratulated himself for what he had done. While he was eating like a wolf, and drinking like a fish, he listened to the two Verniers, who were both well-informed men, and had given the conversation a turn, at once entertaining and instructing. “ Faith !” he suddenly exclaimed, “ I believe that happiness is only to be found in the circle of the honest and worthy part of mankind.”

"And, above all, with an amiable wife," added the youth, embracing his bride.

"Ah! I know your meaning—you don't catch me that way."

"What, then, brother," said Suzanne, "you do not believe that women can be fond and wise at the same time?"

"I have never found but two I sincerely respect; the one is Lady Seymour, and the other yourself; but I am young, and I may yet find a third."

"Would you marry if you should, brother?"

"No, the devil take me if I would—let me hear no more upon that subject."

My uncle ruminated all night on the agreeable scenes that had occupied the day. "If that dog of a waiter had not taken it into his head to dub me a Marquis," said he, tossing and turning in his bed, "I should have lived peaceably, and might have got drunk without the dread of spoiling my fine clothes. Live peaceably!" he exclaimed immediately after; "I believe repose to be as tiresome as my Marquise. Talk to me of the command of a ship, and directing it at one's pleasure on the immeasurable ocean—of taking towns, and putting garrisons to the sword—of sacking and burning cities—of an island where I might carry my booty and my slaves—where I could establish myself, and become a King!—Ah! suppose I should be a King, what would I do? Make war upon my neighbours—destroy them—raise them up—and when I should have humbled all my enemies, I would attack the wild boars and wolves of the forests; when I had routed them too—when there were no more wild boars or wolves, why then I would begin to grow old, and should want nothing but my bottle. My mind is made up; this very day I will go to the Minister of Marine, and demand to have the command of a ship."

Behold my uncle fatigued of being a Marquis, wishing to become a King, yet incapable of seeing beyond the bottle he held in his hand, and which he was unable to quit. How many are there who indulge in such reveries, who have performed nothing at all to justify their ambition ! How many others are there, who, after having been every thing, retire to their bottle as to their last consolation ? How many brave the dangers of the field, and know not whither they shall be able to retire !

Vernier combated this new project of my uncle with all his might ; he exhausted all his eloquence in painting the pleasures of an obscure and peaceful life. To the advantages of a conjugal connection, and a useful industry. Thomas opposed his brilliant and extravagant chimeras, and to arguments the most convincing, his pertinacious obstinacy. As the last resource, Vernier enumerated the insurmountable difficulties which presented themselves to the accomplishment of the wishes of Monsieur le Marquis. The strictest inquiry was made before any one was admitted into the Royal Marine. The command of a ship was never given but to an officer of consummate skill ; besides, it was impossible for my uncle to prove either his nobility, or the acquirement of more than a very superficial knowledge of naval affairs ; moreover, in those times the favours of ministers were the result of intrigue. My uncle was unknown, and incapable of making his court to them ; at least it was necessary to employ that patience and address which supplied the want of talents and ability. Vernier concluded, that far from acceding to his demand the Minister of Marine would look upon him as a madman, and perhaps dismiss him with contempt. Piqued at this last word, and fatigued by the length of his sermon, my uncle drily observed that he knew nothing of naval affairs, and he advised him to go and write his letters and petitions. Vernier thanked

him for allowing him the liberty to attend to his own business ; he assured him he should ever be ready to give him proofs of his gratitude, though he never would approve of acts of folly. He took his wife under his arm, embraced the officer of the Royal Marine, who returned his affection with a very bad grace. He departed, recommending to him not to forget that it was necessary to be very circumspect with regard to persons in place, even though he should have cause to complain of their treatment of him.

My uncle departed at the same time, dressed and powdered in the highest style, and fully confident of running down the game he was in pursuit of. His lackey, whom he had provided with a laced coat, thought himself a person of distinction, strutted up behind the carriage, and looked down upon the foot passengers with disdain. Arrived at the Minister's hotel, he insolently told the porter that Monsieur le Marquis desired to speak to his Lordship. As an impudent valet can only belong to a person of importance, he suffered him to pass, though it was not the time of the day at which the Minister's levee began.

The Minister, who perceived an unknown person, embroidered from head to foot, traversing his court-yard, and followed by a lackey covered with gold lace, took him for a Governor of one of the Leeward Islands. He advanced to the door of his cabinet, respectfully saluted my uncle, and reached him a chair.

Bold and presumptuous as Thomas was, yet a *tete-a-tete* with the substitute of a King, and the marks of respect and consideration with which he received him, could not fail of exciting a certain degree of embarrassment. The Minister observed his confusion, and seemed to invite him to speak. Thomas found all his confidence desert him, and he could not utter a word ; he knew not how to begin. His

awkward and embarrassed air confirmed the opinion the Minister had at first conceived of my uncle ; he deemed it an act of kindness and civility to inspire confidence in a man unaccustomed to the world, and habituated only to the society of negroes ; he therefore made the first advances.

" To whom, Sir, have I the honour of addressing myself ?"

" To the Marquis de la Thomassière."

" To the Marquis of where ?"

" De a Thomassière, I tell you."

" I do not know your house ?"

" O ! It is the Hotel Grange Batelière—does it please you ? Are you deaf, my Lord ?"

" No, Sir, and"—

" I have told you my name and my residence, is not that enough ?"

" Do you know who you are talking to ?"

" Surely I do ; are not you the Minister of Marine ?"

" You seem to have forgot that I am."

" I don't understand you, my Lord."

" So much the worse for you : however, to the point—what do you want ?"

" The command of a ship of a hundred guns."

" S'death ! you belong to the 'Marine,' then ?"

" What a question ?"

My uncle, who by this time had perfectly recovered himself, related the history of his escape from Yarmouth, and the high exploits you have already read. The Minister, who, from the beginning of the narration, perceived what sort of a man he had to do with, assumed a haughty and forbidding air, scarce listened to the narrator, but amused himself with his pug dog.

" Do you know, my Lord, that such a man as I am, merits your attention, and that when he is talking to you, you ought to let your cur alone ?"

"Do you know, my friend, that what you have gained, is more than you had any pretensions to—that you have nothing to expect from the King—that it does not become you to disturb his Ministers with the relation of your mad actions—and that I advise you to retire quietly, very quietly, if you wish me to forget your impertinence?"

"If you wish me to forget your's I advise you"—

"Scoundrel, be silent and depart!"

"I will neither do the one or the other."

"Upon my soul this insolence is rather too much!"—The Minister rang his bell, and my uncle was thrust out by ten or twelve valets, who did not give him time to recollect himself, but hurried him into his carriage, and shut the door upon him.

"Well," said Thomas, as he was returning home, "that dog of a fellow Vernier predicted every thing that has happened to me, and, faith! I must believe all he says in future. Damn the Minister, my Marquisate, and my kingdom altogether: I will instantly turn citizen—I shall find no difficulty in that."

With my uncle a resolution taken, was the same as executed. He dismissed his valet, laid down his carriage, sent for a broker and a jeweller, sold for a thousand crowns what cost him ten thousand francs, paid his host, called for a hackney-coach, threw himself into it, with fourteen thousand francs, which were all he had left; and went to dine with his brother-in-law, whose advice he was now resolved implicitly to follow.

Vernier rather expected this visit. He had totally forgot the haughty manner in which Thomas had conducted himself towards him, and sincerely applauded the sensible resolution he had formed. You may easily imagine that the wounded pride of my uncle would not suffer him to relate

exactly what had passed at the Minister's house ; there are many persons more modest than my uncle, who would not have admitted they had been turned out of doors. Thomas merely said that his demand had been rejected ; that the refusal he had met with, had given him a distaste for grandeur ; and, rendered submissive by his disgrace, he was willing to adopt whatever Vernier proposed. He consented to take lessons in reading and writing ; he promised to bind himself apprentice to some decent tradesman ; and it was agreed in the afternoon, that they should take a convenient lodging in an airy situation, that is to say, in the upper part of a house, where they should live together, and bear their expenses in common. You may judge that this scheme was not much to the taste of my uncle ; he had made a thousand objections to it ; but humbled by his morning's adventure, and almost converted to reason, he contented himself with preserving silence ; and Vernier and his wife contemplated him with an air, which seemed to say—“ We shall make something of him at last.”

The lodging hired, Vernier immediately employed workmen to get it ready for their reception ; he did not wish to be splendid, but merely decent —above all, it was not necessary to lose any time with such a man as Thomas, whom he was every moment apprehensive would escape him :—he therefore recommended the utmost diligence ; and while they were exerting themselves to obey him he took my uncle to his shop, and gave him his first lesson.

Thomas, who was not over anxious to learn, but who did not dare to say so, depended upon tiring his master's patience by pretending a degree of inaptitude which did not belong to his character. The master, who guessed his intention, and who wished him to learn, opposed his obstinacy by the most unwearied perseverance. He passed two hours in

vain endeavours to beat the lesson into him. The scholar, after having yawned upwards of sixty times, pretended he must go to his hotel for his linen and two suits of clothes he had left there, in order, as he said, that he might not be obliged to return any more, but might be entirely at leisure to pursue his studies. Vernier let him depart, perfectly assured he would come back again; for Thomas had entrusted all his money to his sister, and, like other men, could do nothing without the assistance of that necessary article. He had finished packing up his things when he received a visit, which he did not expect; alarming as the nature of it was, it did not disturb him—What visit was it? I shall not tell you till you come to the next chapter, because the present one appears to me to be quite long enough.

CHAP. VI.

Catastrophe.

LOUISA owed my uncle a grudge for having insulted her, disdained her, abused her, quitted her, and, what was worse than all, for not having paid her. Robin's body still bore the marks of the tongs, and he deeply regretted not having had it in his power to assist the Marquis in completely ruining himself. Revenge, they say, is the pleasure of base souls—I believe it is no less an enjoyment to many pretended honest personages: be that as it may, these two marauders had laid their heads together, and had arranged their plan. By dint of a deal of trouble and inquiry, Robin had found out, though I do not know where, the Recruiting Officer, now no longer a Recruiting Officer, who had assisted Louisa, in the days of her glory, in deceiving the Spanish Ambassador. The officer, not over scrupulous as to the choice of his means, immediately entered into the views of Madame Armenia.

He hoped to obtain from Thomas a considerable sum, which he concluded he might lawfully divide among his associates. Of all the different modes of punishing men, there is nothing more agreeable to those who inflict pain, than to put them under contribution.

The officer, informed by Louisa and Robin of the prodigious bodily strength and violent character of the man he was about to attack, had recourse to the precautions usually employed by those who usurp the military uniform, without possessing those qualities which render them worthy to wear it. He placed a quire of paper between his shirt

and his waistcoat, his pistols in his pocket, and his sword by his side; he bravely entered the apartment where my uncle was, taking special care not to go too far from the door, in order to be ready to retreat in case of necessity.

Thomas, as I have told you, was tying up his last parcel, and did not observe what was passing behind him. On a sudden he heard some one in the room; he looked round, and perceived a strange figure of a man, with a fierce cocked hat, his brows knit, his right leg extended, his body drawn back, one hand upon the hilt of his sword, and the other on the but-end of a pistol, which was sticking out of his breeches pocket.

"What in the devil's name do you want here?" said my uncle.

"Do you not recollect who I am, fellow!"

"No, faith! and if I did, I should not have much cause to brag of your acquaintance."

"Don't you recollect the officer who enlisted you at the house of Madame Armenia?"

"Well, what then?"

"For six years you constantly served; within this year you have been upon the list of deserters from the regiment. I know that you have gone over to the enemy, and borne arms against France. However, I will dispense with having you hanged, or even joining the regiment, which is at Pondicherry, provided you will pay me down nine thousand franks;—this, Mr. Thomas, is what I came to tell you."

"And this, Mr. Recruiting Serjeant, is what I have to tell you. I have served whom I pleased, and where I pleased; and as to your list of deserters and my engagement, I don't care a curse for either; they are only fit for a place which it is not worth my while to mention; and as to hanging, it is only such rascals as you are that are hung. I will neither go to Pondicherry, nor will I give you the twen-

With part of a sou. But now I recollect you cheated me out of a Louis at least, for a shabby worn-out coat, and an old rusty sword ; you shall refund it this very instant, or I shall shut the door, and we will currycomb one another like a couple of brave boys."

The Recruiting Officer had come to frighten my uncle out of his money, and not to fight ; he already began to cast an eye over his shoulder, and his right leg, so firmly extended, suddenly took to trembling ; his threatening brow had lost its ferocity, and his whole appearance betokened terror.—“Come,” said my uncle, “hand me the Louis, or take your choice of weapons. Quick !—Speak, vile dirt ! or I’ll trample you under my feet !”

My uncle, in terminating this harangue, had taken his fire-arms from his parcel ; his drawn sword and double barrelled pistols were displayed upon the table ; he waited for the Recruiting Officer to decide whether he would be run through the body, or have his brains blown out ; it was only to say the word.

The Officer, stammering and trembling, still drew back towards the door ; he at length felt it behind him, and recovering his agility in proportion as he got out of the reach of danger, made a spring, and was fortunate enough to gain the outside. While he held the door, half open he said, “I’ll teach you this very evening how deserters are treated, who resist their superior officers.”—In two leaps he was at the bottom of the stairs. “And I’ll teach you,” exclaimed my uncle out of the window “how I treat such a cowardly son of b---as you are, or any of the rascally ragamuffin crew you can bring with you. Hear me, varlet ! I meant to have slept at my brother-in-law’s; but I won’t stir a peg ; here I’ll wait, and if you have any soul, damn me but I’ll show you some glorious sport !”

The Recruiting Officer went in search of Monsieur Agobert, the chief of the party to which he belonged; who had never served in any corps, but who wore the uniform of all, and had obtained the cross of Saint Louis for no other service than having walked thirty years on the Quai de la Ferraille. Monsieur Agobert, ever happy when he could gain a man to the State, observed that my uncle, on account of his age when he enlisted, could not be considered as a deserter, but that as he was of age now, he must, by fair or foul means, be compelled to ratify his engagement, unless he preferred paying the sum demanded; in which case, neither Louisa or Robin, who had nothing to do with the King's service, was to have a part of it, but it was to be equally divided between him, Agobert, and the Recruiting Officer.

In consequence of this new arrangement, by which two rogues cheated two others of the same cast, Monsieur Agobert took the command, for the evening, of a guard of Patrole. By a singular fatality, Monsieur Riboulard happened to be on duty that day. He received orders to take my uncle dead or alive, and bring away his strong box. What a glorious day for Riboulard! He would for ever be sheltered from the incursions of Thomas, who, in some unlucky moment or other, might come as he had promised, and terminate the litigation respecting Rosalia's property; besides he reckoned upon paying himself by his own exertions, a sous at least for every livre of the sum confiscated.

While Riboulard and his followers were arranging a plan of attack, which might enable them to seize their victim without exposing their own persons — while they were cleaning their muskets, sharpening their bayonets, and preparing their cartouch boxes, the Lieutenant of Police was also busy in concerting measures against my uncle. He had received a letter from the Minister of Marine, desiring him to send

to the Bicetre a fellow whom no one knew anything of, who had had the audacity to insult him even in his cabinet ;—the letter terminated by the name and address of the delinquent.

The Lieutenant of Police, anxious to oblige the Minister, had expedited the order ; and the Inspector who was charged with it, having been informed that Thomas was a man who would make but short work of all the Police Officers in Paris, had thought proper to take a strong guard with him ;—he also commanded that of Riboulard, for you must know the Patrole are under the control of every other civil or military power.

Supported by this second authority, much more respectable than the first, Riboulard's eyes sparkled with joy ; he entertained not the least doubt of success. He had twenty-five brave men with him, four of whom had served among the troops of his Holiness the Pope, and three in the invincible army of the Abbé de Stavelot.

My uncle, who had always his wits about him, had concluded, from the last words of the Recruiter, that he might expect something to amuse him in the evening, and his imagination was heated by the idea.—“ It is a long time,” said he, “ since I fought, and it is good to keep one's hand in ;—to chastise rogues is a useful as well as an honourable exercise. But suppose I am killed ? Well then I shall have no occasion to learn to read, or go ‘prentice to a trade ; therefore, come what will, I can but get the worst of it.”

The first measures he took had for their object that of securing him from the solicitations of Vernier, who he knew would not fail to counteract his manœuvres upon the present occasion. He entreated his host to inform him, if he called, that Monsieur le Marquis was gone away with the remainder of his effects, and that he would not return to the hotel ; he added, it was his intention to sleep there that night, for particular reasons.

After this he proceeded to adopt a series of dispositions worthy of Marlborough himself—that celebrated hero whom the French have endeavoured to ridicule by a parcel of stupid ballads, which only reflect disgrace on those who sing them.

Money is the sinew of war; my uncle had thirty-six francs in his pocket; it was more than was necessary to put himself in a state of defence. The first thing to be done, when a place is threatened with a siege, is to provide ammunition and provisions. Two loaves of six pounds each, four dried tongues, a dozen of wine, two pounds of gunpowder, three pounds of ball flints, a screw-driver, a worm ramrod, and a gimlet were instantly purchased, and laid in the room. The next thing to be done after a place is victualled and supplied, is to defend the approaches. My uncle drew across the top of the staircase a book-case and a writing-table, which he placed after the manner of a *chevaux de frise*; he made several holes in his door with the gimlet, through which he could fire upon the assailants without being discovered. He locked that door, and barricadoed it with his bed; he placed one of the square tables of his dining-room directly in the passage that led to his chamber; he put two-thirds of his gunpowder in a large tin canister, and crammed it tight; he made a train which communicated from his chamber to the mine; he placed the tin canister under the table, upon which he strewed all the fire-irons he found in his different apartments; he set lighted candles on each side of the mantelpiece, and after having provided every thing necessary for his defence, he bethought him of securing a retreat. He opened the window of his back closet, which looked into the garden; he tied the sheets, secured one end to the window frame, and sent the other to float in the wind. Once descended into the garden, there was nothing more

to be apprehended ; it was secured only by a fence, and my uncle had learned, by saving himself from his Colonel, how to climb and leap like a squirrel.

These preparations were not made without a certain degree of noise ; but since my uncle had adopted the economical system recommended by Vernier, he had removed a story higher, and the floor he had at first occupied, still remained empty. Monsieur le Comte was at the Opera ; Germain was with his mistress ; and the host, as every one knows, was at his private lodging, about a hundred and fifty paces from the hotel.

It was then ten o'clock at night, and my uncle, having nothing else to do, seated himself, and suspended with the utmost tranquillity, with one pistol on the right, and another on the left side of his plate.

He was at his third bottle when he heard somebody knock gently at the yard-door. It was necessary to be all attention ; the lightness of the tap, at half after eleven o'clock, could not but excite his suspicion. He untied his garters, tucked up the sleeves of his shirt to his shoulders, took a pistol in each hand, and immediately endeavoured to discover what sort of assailants he had to cope with.

He was not deceived ; it was Monsieur Riboulard and his myrmidons, who accustomed to attack by surprise, and anxious to make as little alarm as possible, had knocked at the door so as only to be heard by the porter, and those whose interest it was to hear him. Scarce was the door half opened, than the detachment glided into the court-yard, and Monsieur Riboulard ordered the astonished porter, in the King's name, to conduct him to the apartment of Monsieur de la Thomassière.

At the name of *Louis le Bien Aimé*, a man has no choice but to obey. The porter, with his hat

under his arm, and his lantern in his hand, marched before the twenty-five heroes. In traversing the court-yard, Riboulard perceived through the shutters a number of lighted candles, he began to think my uncle had also assembled an army to oppose him, and whatever mind he had to get rid of him for ever, the voice of self-love was louder than that of animosity. Arrived at the foot of the staircase, he invited the Corporal to place himself at the head of the column, while he staid behind, in order to support those who might give way, if any such there could be in so distinguished a corps. The Corporal, who had already taken up his station in the rear, observed that he was at his post, and that it did not become him to march before his commander.

"I entreat you, Sir," said Riboulard, "to go first; I know your talents at an attack."

"I will not go first; the post of honour belongs to you."

My uncle, who listened to this dialogue, laughed in his sleeve at their cowardice.

Riboulard, who could not prevail upon the sub-commandant, fortified himself with a copious draught of good brandy. He stopped a while, in order to give the spirits time to produce their effects; and when he felt his brain elevated by the liquor, and the thirst of booty, he pushed the porter before him, who did not wish to interfere in the affair; nor would he, had not Riboulard made him advance by pricking his legs with the point of his halbert.

Already had they reached half way up stairs; already Riboulard, secure behind the unfortunate porter, listened attentively above twenty times. Emboldened by the profound silence that reigned in the apartment, he forgot his age, and thought only of the riches he should gain without danger, and

of which he would render just such an account as he pleased.

His security was still further augmented by the appearance of the furniture, which obstructed the staircase. He even dared to think my uncle was afraid, and in a firm tone of voice, he ordered his people to remove the book-case and other articles out of the way. Scarce had they touched the *chevaux de frise* of Thomas, than four balls were discharged at the same moment. The innocent porter had his thigh broke, and one of the Patrole was killed on the spot. Riboulard, whom the unexpected explosion had suddenly deranged, tumbled over the soldier who followed, that soldier over another, and they all rolled together pellmell to the bottom of the stairs.

The report of the pistols, the noise of the muskets rattling one against another, the cries of the wounded porter, as well as of those soldiers who endeavoured to draw themselves from under their comrades, threw the whole hotel in a state of alarm and consternation.

The host, persuaded that all the officers in Paris assembled together, would never be able to force my uncle, whom he had no doubt would sooner set fire to the house than surrender, ran to the nearest post of French Guards for assistance. Some of the neighbours hastened to their windows, others descended into the court-yard; they informed themselves of the whole affair, and consulted together what was best to be done. Riboulard, without either hat or wig, mounted a bench, and exhorted the spectators to carry the King's orders into execution by main force. At this invitation every one of the spectators returned home. Thomas loaded his pistols, drank three hearty draughts, lighted his pipe, and resumed his post.

Vernier, the good Vernier, extremely uneasy at his brother-in-law's not returning by midnight, tore

himself with regret from the arms of his tender Suzanne. He arrived at the hotel; he found it all open; he advanced and learned that Thomas was the cause of the tumult. He perceived the porter laying provisionally on a heap of dung, and the dead soldier by him. He retired pitying the madman, whose destruction appeared inevitable.

Twelve French guards then entered the court-yard with hasty march. Their Commander desired Riboulard to show his orders. Riboulard exhibited those of the Police. The French guard replied that he never concerned himself with Police matters, and ordered his troop to wheel to the right. Riboulard ran after him, related the interview between my uncle and the minister, and observed that the order was given at the request of his Lordship the Minister—a circumstance that called upon all the troops in France to see it executed. The French Officer wheeled his guard to the left, and arranged it in order of battle.

He afterwards advanced under my uncle's windows, and haughtily summoned him to open his door if he wished to avoid being instantly shot. Instead of opening the door, Thomas opened a casement, and anointed the orator with the contents of a chamber-pot, which happened to be amply furnished, and he then dexterously retired.

"No quarter!" exclaimed the Officer, foaming with rage; "make ready—present—fire!"—Behold the windows shattered with bullets, and two magnificent pier-glasses broke to pieces.

"To the left—file advance—march!" resumed the French Officer; at the same time mounting the staircase with intrepidity. My uncle made a second discharge; three soldiers of the guard fell, the others leaped forward, assailed the first door with violence, and Thomas had not time to charge again.

When he perceived the door shaken, and ready to give way, he retired to his inner chamber : and, armed with a red-hot poker, waited, with his ordinary *sang froid*, the moment of springing his mine : that moment was not less sudden than a flash of lightning. A passage was scarce opened when the French Guards rushed in with fixed bayonets.

Riboulard, who was persuaded that my uncle must infallibly surrender, that the business was finished, and that he should have nothing to do but to rummage the strong box, had crept on his hands and knees between the legs of the French Guards, by whom he was apprehensive of being anticipated. He appeared in front of the detachment. He was preparing to take an inventory of Thomas's effects while the others were despatching him. He was looking about to see where the trunks were deposited. My uncle instantly recognised him. "Have at you, old rascal!" he exclaimed, and immediately set fire to the train. The fire-irons flew about, wounded the soldiers, and destroyed every thing that came in their way ; the door was forced off its hinges, and a part of the wall fell upon the assailants. Riboulard, who was treading right over the mine at the instant of its explosion, was cut perpendicularly in two, from the *nave* to the *occiput*. All the French Guards were grievously wounded, and Thomas again loaded his pistols, and continued smoking his pipe.

In the mean time this dreadful alarm drew together crowds of curious people from all parts, as well as Patrole guards and regular troops. The Patrole wished to surround the house, to prevent the delinquent's escape, and advised the others to recommence the assault. The Swiss and French guards demanded ladders to mount up to every window at once ; certain, by that means, of either taking or killing a man who could not possibly have his eyes on all sides. They ran for the fire-

MY UNCLE THOMAS.

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had dinner ; at this moment Monsieur le Comte, who, after the play, had been to sup with a certain lady, whose husband was from home, returned with his servant Germain.

He was struck with astonishment ; he inquired, and was informed of the incredible events of the night. He was a Lieutenant of Infantry ; and courage always love those who resemble them. The Comte immediately formed his determination. He entered his apartment, took a white cap, a napkin, and a case-knife, and proceeded to that of my uncle ; he spoke to him from the outer door, in order to avoid a bullet he might otherwise have been in danger of ; declared that in ten minutes twenty ladders would be planted, and his gallant defence rendered useless ; he entreated him to save a brave man, whose valour ought not to be fatal but to the enemies of the State. Thomas said he wished to blow up all of them before he thought of retreat, which, however, he had provided. The Comte replied that it was sufficiently glorious to singly resist forty men—that there were now hundred in the court-yard—that it would be a mark of honour to escape from them—and that he had not a moment to lose. Thomas at last yielded to persuasions ; he put the cap over his ears, made a knot of the napkin, thrust the knife and the knot beneath his waist, marched towards the cabinet, and the Comte descended to his room.

Scarcely had my uncle got on his disguise, than a party of sixty men defiled, and drew up in the court. Thomas, ever master of his thoughts, charges in the air, threw his pistols cabinet, and lowered himself to the knot of the sheets he had tied together. commandant ; he pretended to be right ; he expressed his joy at having

escaped the last fire, which had passed close by him ; he desired the troop, in an ironical tone of voice, to be upon its guard, for that the madman above had forty rounds to fire.

While he was regretting, rejoicing, and advising, he filed along the line, and gained the courtyard. A Swiss grenadier gave him a blow with the back of his sword, and desired him to get out of the way. My uncle had no objection whatever ; he retired from the midst of the curious who had followed him ; he pushed on, gained the street, disengaged himself from the crowd, walked gently towards the Boulevard, turned the corner, and arrived at Vernier's house, who thought he beheld a phantom, surveyed him from head to foot, and shed tears of joy at so unexpected a resurrection.

In the mean time the ladders were planted, and the grenadiers mounted on every side, their muskets slung over their shoulders, and hatchets in their hands. The window shutters and sashes flew to pieces, and the besiegers entered in crowds. They commenced a terrible fire at the closets, the beaufet, and an old trunk—in short, at every thing that my uncle could possibly have transformed into a citadel ; they pierced the window-curtains with their bayonets ; they rushed from chamber to chamber, carrying destruction with them ; they at length reached the cabinet, where the sheets, attached to the window, attested my uncle's emigration. They dispersed about the hotel, opened every door, commenced the most rigorous search, and soon lost sight of their principal object. The Swiss guards, who were charged with visiting the cellars, got drunk and fell fast asleep ; the French Guards pillaged the hotel ; the female servants called out "Rape !" but took good care no one should hear them ; the guards of the Patrole filled their pockets ; the time flowed swiftly away ; the guard-house remained empty ; pickpockets and girls of the town

completely the possession of the streets.—At length the result of this wonderful night was, that with the exception of those who were killed, wounded, or plundered, every one was, in some measure gratified—every one turned the adventure to his own profit: such is generally the consequence of small revolutions as well as the most splendid ones.

CHAP. VII.

My Uncle becomes a Capuchin Friar.

SURPRISE dissipated and joy calmed, it became necessary to talk reason.

"Well, Sir," said Vernier to my uncle, "what do you mean to do now?"

"Faith! I know not."

"If you had confided to me what passed between you and the Minister, and likewise your affair with the Recruiting Officer, I would have given you advice, by following which, you would have been secure; and perhaps have found protectors capable of extricating you from the difficulty."

"I have extricated myself."

"Reflect upon your perilous situation; you have resisted the orders of the King!"

"Why did he give such orders?"

"You have killed your father-in-law!"

"He was an old rascal."

"And twenty besides!"

"Who had no business to interfere!"

"And do you know what will be the consequences?"

"I do not trouble myself about them."

"You will be broke upon the wheel alive!"

A courageous man braves death with arms in his hand; but the idea of being broke upon the wheel, is enough to appal the most resolute. Thomas turned pale at the last words of Vernier. The latter profited by the impression he had produced; he painted the nature of that punishment in such strong and true colours, that the constancy of my

uncle entirely abandoned him. He was no longer that terrible man who two hours before had made every one tremble ; he was a feeble child, as incapable of determining, as of resisting whatever impulse was given him.

Vernier represented to him that the master, whose hotel had been the theatre of war, knew he had money, and consequently he would not fail endeavouring to reimburse himself for the enormous losses he had sustained ; that in order to succeed, he would give all the necessary information to the Police ; that he would point out the friends and relations who might afford a retreat to the destroyer of his house ; and that, therefore, it was impossible for my uncle to remain concealed where he was. My uncle sat with his elbows on his knees, and his chin between his hands ; he listened, but replied not a word. Vernier proposed different measures, which my uncle neither admitted or rejected. Vernier left him to his reflections, and with his charming wife discussed the advantages and inconveniences of the different schemes that presented themselves to his imagination.

He wished to send Thomas to Holland, Dantick, or Saint Domingo, where his money, which happily he had brought from his hotel, would afford him the means of existence, and where the remembrance of his past errors would perhaps render him economical and industrious. Suzanne, who had as much judgment as gentleness, foresaw, that all the Public Authorities, would be leagued against her brother, that he would every where be proscribed, that he would be remarked by his language and manners, and that he would be arrested before he could reach the frontiers. She concluded that it would be better to conceal him till the heat of the search was over ; after which he might be disposed of as circumstances should direct.

Vernier approved of the advice of his wife, and but one difficulty only remained ; it was to know where they should conceal him. Old Vernier and the Old Serjeant were sure friends, who might be depended upon ; but they had been seen at the hotel, and their compliance might bring themselves into difficulties, and hasten the destruction of Thomas.

The very serious manner in which the young couple conducted themselves in endeavouring to procure him a retreat, added to the despair of the conqueror, who now truly cursed himself for his victory. Day began to dawn, and he already thought he beheld those who had escaped from his fury, enter his sister's house ; farther off he saw a gloomy infectious dungeon, the terrifying looks of the judges, and in the background the dreadful apparatus of death.

This dismaying prospect restored him, in some measure, to the exercise of his almost exhausted imagination ; he thought of his own safety, and mentioned, in a feeble tone of voice, his godmother in La Rue Jean Saint Dennis—the same worthy woman who, in his infancy, made him presents of potatoes, which, however, he was not always so fortunate as to partake of.

Vernier was extremely fond of my uncle, but at the same time he was singularly attached to the comfortable and happy life enjoyed with his new bride ; his inquietude increased every moment, and he immediately seized the idea. My uncle was still disguised with his white cap, apron, and case knife. Suzanne powdered his face, gave him a baking-dish under his arm, embraced, and at length breathed at liberty, when from her window she perceived him direct his steps towards a secure asylum, far from her peaceful abode.

Mother Madeleine was still alive ; she was far advanced in years, and, like all old women, very talkative ; but she was a devilish good sort of a woman at bottom. She had already opened her shop, and displayed her vegetables, when my uncle and Vernier made their appearance. She could not refrain from tears when she recollect ed that that great young man was her godson ; she opened her gummy eyes when he demanded a corner of her garret to conceal himself in ; she smiled when he slipped a double Louis into her hand.

To prevent dame Madeleine talking of her godson to the gossips of the neighbourhood, it was necessary to repose confidence in her. Vernier addressed himself to her in a way most likely to ensure her discretion ; he did not quit her before he had fully persuaded her that an indiscreet word would bring my uncle to the rack, and that God would sooner or later punish her for having uttered it.

Madeleine lived in a little garret, which it was necessary Thomas should divide with her ; but his indifference towards women, and her age, as well as her being within the levitical degrees, rendered it impossible that any harm could result from their living in the same room together : the most censorious could not have imagined such a thing.

In the course of the day Vernier brought at different times such articles as were necessary to make my uncle's situation supportable—such as wine, brandy, and tobacco. At every journey he gave Madeleine fresh injunctions not to let her tongue run, and advised Thomas not to stir from his retreat. When he found him perfectly established in his new situation, he ceased visiting him, for fear of being remarked.

In the mean time the battle of my uncle made a most infernal noise all through the city ; it was even the subject of conversation at Court. The

Minister was enraged at his escape ; the Lieutenant of Police at the contempt of his authority ; the Mareschal de Biron at the death of his French guards ; the keeper of the Chatelet at not having the delinquent in his custody ; the hawkers at not being able to cry his last dying speech about the streets ; and Master Sampson* at the loss of his fee.

As Suzanne had suspected, a description of Thomas was sent to all Magistrates, Sheriffs, Bailiffs, Commissaries of Marine, Commanders of Forts, Consuls, Proconsuls, Governors of Colonies, Ambassadors at Foreign Courts, and even to our Consuls at Barbary. The King, who seldom troubled himself about his own affairs, but who attached great importance to this, because he had been informed of the whole particulars—the King of France himself, I say, swore, with his hand not upon the Gospel, but upon the bosom of Madame de Pompadour, that he would have satisfaction of Thomas.

Thomas, secure in his garret, set Kings, Ministers and Subaltern Agents at defiance ; at night sleeping upon a straw bed, in the day-time smoking when he was alone, or drinking with Madeleine when she could quit her shop, and insensibly losing the gloomy impressions which had at first agitated him. He had no wish but to obtain from Vernier a supply of liquor, proportioned to the capacity of his stomach and his usual habits. Vernier, who could not depend upon the prudence of his brother-in-law even when he was perfectly sober, resisted his request, and refused to let him have any money. Thomas, whom thirst rendered industrious, endeavoured to persuade Madeleine to take one of his coats to the *Mont de Piété*†—“ In order,” said he, “ that I may drink, since it is the only pleasure I have left.” He was perfectly assured Vernier

* The *Jack Ketch* of Paris.

† A public place for advancing money upon pledges.

would redeem it ; and Madeleine, who loved a drop herself, found her account in yielding to the entreaties of her godson.

Her dear godson drank such copious draughts, that he felt a violent desire to taste a mouthful of fresh air, and exercise his limbs, by this time stif-fened with inactivity. Madeleine, whose spirits had also been elevated by the wine, spoke to him much after the same manner that the Governess of the Savoyards had done upon an occasion not quite of so serious a nature. He had answered Marguerite that he had rather be shut up in the Bicetre than in her garret ; he now answered Madeleine, that he had rather be publicly broke upon the wheel for an hour, than pass his life in a cock-loft. He hastened down stairs, and Madeleine, whose pray-ers could not restrain him, and who was, from the effects of the wine, incapable of moving to oppose his passage, beheld him depart, and heaved a deep sigh.

The Champs Elysées are within a few paces of the Rue Jean Saint Dennis ; it was on a Sunday, and the weather was fine, consequently the place was thronged with company ; it was to that public walk my uncle thought proper to direct his steps.

He had not made above a couple of turns when he felt an irresistible desire to go to the side where the tea, coffee, and other refreshments were given out. He suddenly found himself in the presence of Suzanne and Vernier, who were conjugally regaling themselves with a bottle of ale and hot buns.

Suzanne, the moment she beheld him, uttered a loud shriek. Vernier remained petrified with terror. Thomas seated himself on the bench beside them, emptied the bottle at a single draught, and called for a bowl of punch. Suzanne insisted he had drank too much already ; Vernier determined the moment it was finished, to put him in a coach, and carry him to his own house. The bowl was

brought, but for this time the foresight of Vernier was at a fault. Thomas, after having nearly drank the whole of the punch himself, rose, and with a firm and resolute air, walked off, and lost himself in the crowd.

It was impossible to observe with indifference a brother and a benefactor seeking pleasure amidst dangers from which so much pains had been taken to secure him. They could not reflect without affright on the dreadful consequences of his imprudent folly, and the dishonour he would bring upon his innocent family. The compassionate young couple did not sleep a wink all night; they scarce spoke a word to each other, but revolv'd in their minds by what means they could restrain a man who seemed absolutely determined on being broke upon the wheel.

Suzanne rose early in the morning, and, without communicating her intention to her husband, she went to consult her confessor, in whom her mother, of pious memory, had told her she ought always to repose implicit confidence.

Her confessor, the Reverend Father Tinchebrai, a poor Capuchin,* of la Rue Saint Honoré, enjoyed the highest esteem among the fair sex, and doubtless he merited it. He never took cognisance of what young girls did when they were alone, nor whether young wives were strictly faithful to their husbands. He was one of the lights of the order, could read his breviary with fluency, and perfectly well knew that *panis* signified bread, *vinum* wine, and *Deus* God, which is all that is necessary to operate a consecration. He was moreover a shrewd Theologian, and embarrassed the most subtle by the adroit manner in which he rendered himself intelli-

* The Capuchins humbly adopt the title of *poor*, as the Popes entitle themselves *Servants of the Servants of God*.—These *Servants* were Sovereigns, and the *poor* Capuchins confessed Kings, consequently governed kingdoms.

gible ; and with regard to his eloquence in the pulpit, no one could vie with him ; witness that famous sermon he composed for the Capuchin Nuns of la Place Vendome, which made so much noise at the time, though you are perhaps not even acquainted with the exordium of it, which I will transcribe, in order to give you an idea of the whole.

“ You have invited me over and over again, illustrious Amazons, to your blessed Convent, flanked on all sides with bastions and turrets, like an impregnable Sion, in order to nourish your virgin souls with the sweet bread of the evangelic word. At length I havē *come*, I have *seen*, and I have *overcome*. I have *come* to combat, with the sword of the Spirit, the crafty parent of lies, and his infernal legions ; I have *seen* the excellence of your understandings, which discover the most sublime thoughts before they are uttered ; and I have *overcome* my modesty, which prevented my appearing before the veiled Parliament of your cloistered reverences. May I arrive without shipwreck at the desired port of your dazzling approbation ! ”

“ Before I enter upon my subject, let me pay a small compliment to Mary, the brightest star in Heaven, the protocol of every perfection, the ocean of grace—that virtuous Saint floating on the sea of the world, of whom the Holy Ghost was the pilot, and the angel Gabriel the protector, when he said, *Ave Maria !* ”

The rest of the sermon was possessed of equal orce : but the talents of Father Tinchebri were not confined to preaching. He was the author of

two works which I cannot sufficiently recommend to the meditation of the faithful ; the one called " The Snuff Box of Grace, for tickling the Noses of Sinners ;" and the other " The Spiritual Syringe, for purifying the Souls of the Ungodly."

The Reverend Father had no sooner heard the recital of his penitent, than, touched with her anxiety, he formed the project of restoring to God a sinner plunged in the sink of vice. He informed Suzanne in his seraphic style, which it would be presumption in me to attempt to imitate, that as none of my uncle's actions bore the stamp of baseness or infamy and were merely the effect of the passions, it was perhaps only necessary to place a salutary example before his eyes, in order to make him a second St. Augustin : that as he had strength sufficient to enable him to carry the holy wallet, he would undertake to get him admitted a Noviciate ; that in consequence of the regulation which prohibited his stirring out for a year, and at the same time forbade any profane mortal sullyng the interior of the Monastery, he would be certain of remaining in safety ; that if at the end of the year, the beneficent St. Francis should refuse him his favour, he would be at liberty to return to the world, which perhaps by that time would have forgot him ; that, lastly, however indisposed he was to hear reason, he would be sensible that when a man was at daggers drawn with the King and Justice, there was no other asylum open to receive him but the arms of God.

Suzanne agreed in every thing he said ; but how was she to propose to such a man as Thomas to turn Capuchin ? It would have been much easier to have persuaded him to have attacked singly the rock of Gibraltar. His reverence replied that the God of mercy sometimes authorized holy violence, "*Compelle intrare,*" saith the Psalmist—*Force him*

to enter; therefore get him once into the Convent, and I'll take care to keep him there."

Suzanne gave Vernier an account of her conversation with Father Tinchebrai, and Vernier thought the idea excellent. He had no intention of clapping his brother into a cloister, in order to inherit his property; he was even persuaded he would never pronounce the vows; but could he only be concealed for a month, it would be a great matter gained. The difficulty consisted in the means by which Thomas was to be *forced* to enter.

Vernier was wise and prudent, but he had not an inventive genius. Suzanne, modest and candid, was in every respect a true woman. Long live that sex for expedients! She said but two words, and Vernier ran to five or six Apothecaries. He brought back six grains of opium and dissolved them in two bottles of good Bourdeaux wine; he put one in each pocket, and proceeded to visit his brother-in-law. He slightly reprimanded him for the prank he had played the evening before, and told him he had come to dine with him. Thomas was glad of his company; a good dinner was ordered, and they sat themselves down to the table. Vernier excused himself from drinking; Thomas drank enough for both; opium soon began to work; a coach was waiting at the door; my uncle was put into it sound asleep; Vernier accompanied him; they set out, and arrived at the Capuchin's Monastery. The new convert was lifted out of the coach, and immediately undressed; they cut off his hair, put him on a coarse cloth dress, tied it with the famous girdle of the order, and bound sandals on his feet; they conveyed him to a retired cell, shut him in, double locked the door, and departed.

The vapours of the opium dissipated by degrees. Thomas stretched his arms, and opened his eyes. A praying desk made of oak, a large crucifix of

maple, and a Death's head, were the first objects that struck his astonished sight. He sat up; his dress, his girdle, his sandals, and his shaved head added to his surprise; he leaped from his bed, overthrew the wooden crucifix and thundered at the door. The door opened, and twenty Monks, each with a lighted wax taper in his hand, entered in silence, and surrounded Thomas, who stood petrified with terror. They sung *miserere*; they presented him the Death's head, and made him kiss it; they laid him upon his bed, and covered him with a large pall; after which they sung a *de profundis*. The imagination of Thomas was bewildered; he stared about him, and listened, but could form no judgment either as to what he saw or heard. The chief of the Monks, addressing him, and speaking through his nose, desired him to recommend himself to the Most High. He announced to him that he had been condemned eight days since, and that the lethargy from which he had recovered, was the terrible effect which hearing his awful sentence pronounced had produced. Thomas protested he remembered nothing at all about it. His Reverence remarked that it was a new proof of the violence of the shock, and added that the sentence would be executed in the course of the day, unless he accepted the condition to which the King, in his mercy, had attached his pardon—namely, to turn Capuchin, and edify the world after having scandalized it by his excesses; and they had so firmly depended upon his compliance, that they had informed the King of it, and had clad him beforehand with the habit of the order.—“Come,” said Thomas, sighing, “if I must be a Capuchin, I must; but, s'death! I don't believe I shall die one.”

The lowly Fathers had formerly found extreme difficulty in recruiting their numbers; the son of the meanest citizen had blushed at the idea of

uniting himself to so filthy and indigent an order. In consequence of this, the servant of servants, actuated by his paternal solicitude, had granted the Capuchins a dispensation, which exempted from the usual severities of the noviciateship, those whose fervour was unequal to a year's endurance of them. As the answer of my uncle did not announce any extraordinary zeal, Father Tinchebrai proposed to apply the dispensation in his behalf, and at the same moment the principal Father received the vows of Thomas under the name of Brother Angelo, of Paris.

This was not precisely the way the affair had been arranged between Suzanne and her Confessor ; but the opportunity of recovering a lost sheep is momentary, and when it presents itself, must be seized. What Christian, anxious for the honour of his holy religion, would condemn this pious fraud ?

Brother Angelo was caressed by the whole Convent ; they flattered him, gave him plenty to eat and drink, and permitted him to swear the rest of the day ;—the next morning they sent him out, accompanied by one of the order, with a staff in his hand, a cowl over his eyes, and his gown drawn up at the sides with leather thongs.

Vernier, curious to learn the result of the stratagem, had pretended to go and hear mass, in order to get an opportunity of slipping from the Church to the cell of his wife's Confessor. He learned that his brother-in-law was gone to the Convent of Arras, under the conduct of a pious and adroit Father ; and that the family might dispose of the property of him who was dead to the world, after having performed the ceremony of giving a benefaction to the Convent. Of what service would the representations of Vernier have been ? Thomas was completely *capuchined*, and there was no help for it ; his vows could not be recalled.

Robin had taught Thomas how to play the Marquis—Father Seraphim taught Brother Angelo how to play the Capuchin—how to plant himself in the highways, speak through his nose, turn up his eyes, bow himself down with his hands crossed on his breast ; he likewise taught him the use of his beads, repeated to him several mystical words, which have the virtue of forcing from the country people loaves of bread, gammons of bacon, and sometimes fine fat fowls and turkeys ; and at last when they came to a Chapel, Father Seraphim, perferred the ceremony of a white mass—that is to say, a mass calculated to excite laughter, assisted by Father Angelo, to whom he prompted the responses.

Brother Angelo grew impatient, yawned, scraped with his feet, and from time to time exclaimed —“ Oh ! damn your grimaces, Father Seraphim ! ” —Father Seraphim continued without seeming to hear him.

They stopped at all the houses appropriated for the Capuchins ; and the poor Fathers, prepossessed by the good-nature of my uncle, the eccentricity of his character, and the necessity of encouraging him, feasted him to his heart’s content, let him drink his fill, and prayed Heaven to direct him in the paths of grace.

But at Arras affairs were entirely changed. Father Seraphim had studied the disposition of the new brother to the bottom, and he advised the Principal of the Convent to assume an absolute empire over him, if he wished to avoid endangering the dignity of the order. The reverend Father, who was himself a deep observer of mankind, perceived, in the course of the day, that Father Seraphim was not mistaken, and that Brother Angelo was only a Capuchin in his outward habit ; he at first tried what effect remonstrances would have, but Brother Angelo absolutely laughed at them.

themselves—on the contrary, they had carefully nourished and fattened the charming little insects, to which they were to be indebted for a momentary pre-eminence. This was the first species of cabal.

The preliminary ceremony terminated, they proceeded to the election ; they scrupulously marked the middle, the exact middle of the table ; —there they respectfully placed the *Seraphic Louse*, who was to manifest the celestial decrees. All the Fathers leant their chins upon the table, and had their beards extended like so many fans. They waited in anxious silence till it should please the louse to make choice of a retreat. He, whose beard first received the sacred treasure, was promoted to the eminent degree of Provincial. What efforts were made to entice it ! The Fathers had passed the whole morning in scenting their beards with the most fragrant oils and odiferous perfumes. This was the second species of cabal.

The new Provincial sung a *Té Deum*, the rest joined in chorus, and the ceremony was closed by a grand dinner, where they drank to the health of the benefactors of the order, the excellent wines which had been sent to supply the feast.

From the commencement of the mystic operations, Brother Angelo had manifested his contempt for the *sacred* and solemn ceremony by immoderate fits of laughter. His swearing, his stealing into public houses, and his want of subordination had been overlooked ; but to laugh at the *Seraphic Louse* ! it was what a Capuchin never pardoned, nor ever will pardon. As dissimulation is one of the virtues of the cloister, they suffered nothing to betray the general indignation which the conduct of Brother Angelo had excited.

He had scarce retired to his cell and fallen asleep, when he was awaked in a fright ; they seized him by the legs and arms, and tied him in spite of all his efforts ; they gagged him to prevent his making a noise, and took him to a part of the Convent where

he had never been before ; they lifted up a large stone, placed a long cord under his arm, read the dying service over him, and let him down into a dungeon sixty feet deep, and replaced the stone, at the same time saying—“*Vade in pace !*” that is to say—“*Depart in peace !*” to a man they were sending to the devil.

Brother Chrysostom was charged with the care of him ; but his cares were to be confined to giving him a half a pound of bread and a pint of water a day, till it should please the Lord to call Brother Angelo to himself.—They wrote to Vernier that he had died suddenly, which was true in a certain sense, called by the Monks *mental restriction*.

In the mean time Chrysostom, a consummate hypocrite, was no more of a Capuchin at bottom than my uncle ; he had been a pirate and a Captain of banditti, and the conformity of their tastes and habits had inspired him with a friendship towards Thomas ;—he furnished him with the means of making good cheer, gave him plenty of tobacco, fresh straw from time to time, and a new rope when the one he had was worn out. He would have informed Vernier of the disagreeable situation of his friend, but the one might be as imprudent as the other, and the least indiscretion would inevitably end in his own destruction. He feared the dreadful words “*Vade in pace !*” He might have facilitated the escape of the poor captive, but then he must have fled with him, and he found the life of a Capuchin very comfortable. He therefore confined himself to rendering him those good offices by which he ran no risk, and he beguiled the tediousness of his hours by giving him hopes that the good Father would, sooner or later, relax of their severity ; but he at the same time was fully persuaded that religious devotees are as persevering in vengeance as they are in ignorance, intolerance, arrogance, pride and lust.

Let me now leave my uncle in his hole, from which he cannot get out without my permission, and, to diversify your pleasures, forget his sorrows at the feet of your mistress. May her soft smiles encourage your passion, and afford you an assurance of perpetuating the delights of love !

CHAP. VIII.

A Word or two concerning your humble Servant.

I HAVE long, benevolent and most respected reader, entertained you with the exploits and achievements of my uncle ; it is now high time I should surmount that modesty which has hitherto kept me behind the curtain. I am about to appear upon the scene myself, and relate a small portion of my own history.

Vernier, who was an attentive, complaisant, and what is of more importance, a loving husband, seldom quitted the company of his wife, and for this reason—he was jealous ;—pardon him this defect—it was the only one that threw a veil over his good qualities. Suzanne, who was the epitome of prudence, both before and after marriage, was passionately fond of her husband ; nevertheless, the green-eyed imp, Jealousy, perpetually imbibited her husband's repose ; it tormented him by day, and haunted his imagination by night. A jealous husband is the greatest misfortune that can befall a woman who is really virtuous. Vernier began to despair of having an heir ; but at the end of a few years, he reaped the fruit of his wishes. I was delivered into his arms by Dame Catherine, an expert midwife, as she was generally reputed ; but whose deficiency, in point of skill, upon this occasion, was the cause of my being his only son, unless he gave me a brother he could not publicly acknowledge, which I do not believe, nor can you either, after the knowledge you possess of his character and his morality.

Suzanne, the wife of a *man of letters*, considered me a little *Rousseau*. She would not entrust me to mercenary hands. I had the happiness of deriving my nourishment from her own lovely breast; and, as the splendour of my father's establishment had been considerably augmented by my uncle's having entered into monastic orders, and by the uncontested succession to Riboulard's property, he consequently kept a good table. It necessarily followed that my mother's milk was excellent, and I thrrove like a young mountain kid.

Scarce was I able to talk, than they seriously reflected upon the necessity of developing my understanding; the foregoing part of this incomparable work has doubtless convinced you that their attentions to my education were not thrown away. They never suffered my early infancy to be corrupted by stories of sorceries and enchantments, which leave an impression on the weak brains of children, the traces of which are scarce ever effaced. However, as it was necessary to lull me to repose with histories of some sort or other, my mother would relate the lofty deeds of my uncle, which she called extravagances, but which appeared to my young imagination wonderful. Thus, for several years, my juvenile sports were solely confined to what I called playing my Uncle Thomas: I had wooden swords—pistols made of alder—I overthrew paper castles—captured ships, made of walnut shells—I had a puppet I called Lady Seymour, which I dressed, undressed, kissed, and always seated by me at my meals.

At six years of age I could read; at twelve I was a little gentleman, fit to be presented in any company, and my father took me with him wherever he went. He had long quitted his humble situation; the state of his fortune had enabled him to make an appearance in the world, and he at first had become Secretary to a Counselor of Parlia-

ment, whom he quitted, because he became enamoured of my mother. He successively entered into the service of a President, an Archbishop, and the Chancellor, all of whom he quitted for the same reason ; he turned grocer, but soon sold off his stock, because those who purchased the least trifling article, thought themselves at liberty to address the most tender things to the lady behind the counter. He bought a good farm, which he immediately after sold again, because the Lord of the Manor claimed the right of concubinage : it was a charming privilege imagined in the time of the Crusades, and authorized the Lord to lay with his tenants' wives on their wedding night. My mother had long since lost the power of making an offering of the first fruits of her love ; but the right of the Lord would have attached retrospectively the moment she became appurtenant to his domains, and a first night is always agreeable with a pretty woman. To terminate unpleasant contests —contests peculiarly disagreeable to a husband, my father soon carried off his turtle from this hotbed of adultery, and obtained the situation of a Register at the Court at Paris, which he kept, because he had no other clerk but myself; and those who called upon him on business, never penetrated farther than his office.

I was now eighteen years of age. My mother's charms had ceased to give my father any uneasiness, and he began to think of my advancement in life. The son of a bailiff's follower might limit his ambition to the profession of a register ; the son of a register might at least pretend to that of an Attorney. I was placed with one of the most dextrous and renowned practitioners in the law ; and at the end of two years my dear parents flattered themselves that the daughter of some farmer, or wine merchant, would think herself happy in uniting her fortune to mine. These hopes were not with-

out foundation. I understood the affairs of the world ; I possessed a good figure ; and on Sundays the young ladies, whom my father had in view, were invited to his house. I was on the best possible terms with all of them. We amused ourselves with all manner of innocent diversions ; we played at forfeits, kissed, and romped ; and the evenings generally terminated with some of the adventures of my uncle, which I related with a grace that commanded attention. Sometimes they laughed at his eccentricities, sometimes they sympathized in his sufferings, and frequently the tribute of a tear was paid to the memory of the deceased by my mother, myself, and even by my auditory.

The result of these evenings was a formal convention between my father and the father of Mademoiselle Felicité, that we should be married as soon as I should be old enough to be admitted to practise my profession ; and my future father-in-law was to give sixty thousand franks for the pleasure of seeing his daughter an attorney's wife.

The 14th of July, 1789, which arrived in its regular course, like all other days, but attended with most tremendous events, singularly deranged all those plans. The Parliament fell to the ground, and dragged in its fall attorneys and attorneys' wives. Mademoiselle Felicité, who was born to a brilliant station, was married to the President of her district ; and as they had fifty thousand crowns between them, they were guillotined three years after, under pretence, that they carried on a correspondence with Pitt and Cobourg, whom they knew no more of than you do, supposing you never saw or heard of them in your life.

For my part, I was not in love with the young lady ; I easily consoled myself for her loss, and followed the example of my superiors. All the Clerks, without exception, became avowedly official defenders or Judges, dependent upon those

who appointed them ; the consequence was, the poor pleaders daily lost excellent causes, but then they sometimes gained desperate ones, which was a sufficient compensation. However, we are now going to have a new civil code, which, doubtless, will be a good one, for it has been talked of these twelve years.

I went every day to plead in a gray coat and a pig-tail—a costume which did not impart the most dignified appearance to the Tribunals, but was extremely convenient to such of my brethren who did not gain sufficient to purchase a gown. As I was neither a Chauveau, a Julienne, or a Belart, my emoluments did not amount to a very large sum ; but, to make amends, my father's business was become excellent, because, where attorneys and advocates are, for the most part, asses, the Officers of the Courts are obliged to direct the business.

We lived in the enjoyment of every comfort. My father was gaining a fortune rapidly. The war, which was on the point of devastating Europe, the suppression of the Nobility, Monks, Kings, religion, probity, filial piety, and conjugal fidelity—the establishment of liberty, equality, ignorance, vandalism, stock-jobbing, usury, impudence, and public misery, did not prevent men from going to law ; and we assisted them in ruining themselves entirely, while wishes, which already began to be realized, were offered up for a new order of things.

One evening I was reading the ancient laws, and expecting new ones, my father was busy in registering a law proceeding, and my mother was distributing soup to ten or twelve of her equals, who were dying with hunger, and were kissing her feet while they received her bounty, when suddenly some one knocked violently at the door. My mother, terrified, trembled for her head. The best heads in France were not, at that time, over safe :

the ancient mode of dying in bed was exploded ; the modern one, of making a public exit into the other world, appeared to have given much more satisfaction ; every one seemed pleased with it—at least no one said any thing against it. The apprehensions of my mother, who did not pique herself upon following the fashion, were augmented when she saw a ferocious-looking fellow enter the room near six feet high, formed like Hercules, swarthy, dirty, and ragged, with an enormous sabre, depending from beneath his shoulder with a string, both ends of which were decorated with two or three dozen of human ears. He seized upon the soup, and devoured half of it, while our fears prevented our opposing him. “Let me have some drink !” he exclaimed, in a voice like thunder. My father hastened to present him with a bottle of wine. He emptied the bottle at a single draught ; and, laying hold of my mother, embraced and kissed her with the utmost vehemence and cordiality. My father, agitated by some remains of his former jealousy, was extremely tempted to express his indignation ; but he, however, contained his anger, wisely reflecting that every day not only produced an abundance of new events, but an abundance of new laws ; and it was consequently not impossible but it might have been patriotically decreed that women should be enjoyed in common, as well as every other species of property—and farther, that his equal appeared to be a man strong enough to break every bone in his body, if he dared to make the least objection—“ ‘Sdeath and damnation !’ vociferated the latter, “ won’t you know me ? Am I then so very much altered ? ” We approached, and surveyed him, but still doubted ; the swarthy stranger terminated our doubts by tearing open his shirt, and exhibiting the mark of the wound through his body he had formerly received from the Corporal, with whom he had fought the duel. “ It is Thomas ! ” said my mother,

and immediately fainted away. "It is Thomas!" echoed my father, and immediately fell back in his chair. "It is my Uncle!" said I, and I immediately lost all recollection. When we came to ourselves—"Ah! by what strange adventure, brother? By what happy chance, Sir? What! are you my famous uncle? Speak—explain—relate!" we exclaimed all in the same breath; and Thomas briefly related what you are going to read.

Brother Chrysostom was no sooner informed of the suppression of the Monks, than he thought it a duty he owed himself to gain on the side of patriotism, what he had lost by his holy wallet. He threw his Capuchin dress into a ditch, and posted away to the Commune, to deny Jesus Christ, and denounce the poor Fathers, who sometimes violated the vow of poverty, and very frequently that of chastity, and, what was still worse, buried people alive. Immediately a cobler rose, and moved the Council of the Commune to decree that brother Chrysostom had deserved well of his country, and the decree was inscribed on the register. The cobler also moved that the Commune should proceed that instant to the deliverance of Brother Angelo; and the Commune put itself in motion, followed by the cobler, his comrades, the barking orators of the Popular Assembly, butchers' boys, and their dogs. They unearthed my uncle, who was astonished once more to behold day-light; they rendered him the honours due to a victim of despotism; they drove away a part of the good Fathers, while the vindictive Thomas amused himself by knocking the others on the head, and the Procureur Syndic took possession of the place for himself and a gentleman's wife he had stolen away, and held in requisition for his pleasures.

The Sappho of Arras, for there is a Sappho every where, composed in the course of the day an heroic poem, entitled, "*The Misfortunes of Thomas*.

mas." It was read in the evening at the Theatre, and crowned with applause. In fact, it was very well written. Sappho became more the object of admiration than she was ever before, and of course she estranged herself in proportion from her husband, her children, and her family concerns; indeed, she strictly followed the example of all female authors, and cared very little about either.

Sappho was crowned with a civic wreath for her poem, and the cobler received the same honour for his motion. Thomas, for having knocked out the brains of five or six Capuchins, part of the Monastic Aristocracy, received his due share of honour; and, as he declared his wish to return to Paris, the Commune gave him an order for ten Louis, upon a certain Baron, who, though he conducted himself peaceably, had resumed his family name, suppressed his armorial bearings, and treated the mob as his equals, was nevertheless obliged to pay it because he had been a Baron.

The first object of Thomas, when he arrived at the capital, had been to find out his brother-in-law, whom he could not learn any tidings of, and whom he might have met without knowing; for thirty years, or more, makes a very material difference in the appearance of a man. He determined, therefore, to trace Vernier, and follow him to America, or Lapland, if it should be necessary. He first inquired at the place where he had been a writer; from thence he proceeded to the house of the Ex-Counsellor, who sent him to the Ex-President, who could give him no information, because he had been guillotined the day before; but a servant, who had denounced his master, in order to get possession of his watch and ring, referred Thomas to the Ex-Archbishop, who had emigrated; his housekeeper referred him to the Ex-Chancellor, who was dead; but his porter, the President of a Revolutionary Committee, directed him to

the grocer's shop, the proprietor of which had been *lanterned* for having forestalled brandy, of which the *Lanterners** were extremely fond. This was the reason my uncle at length addressed himself to the green-grocer, at the corner of the street, where Vernier had formerly resided.

The latter had preserved a confused idea of the farm Vernier had purchased. She called it *Savigny* instead of *Savigny*. This again was the reason my uncle travelled through Normandy, where he explored every village, the name of which ended in *i*; from thence he returned to Paris, and from Paris proceeded to Passi, Poissi, Neuilli, Chilli, Bondi, Suci, Baubigni, Chevilli, Issi, Grigni, Boissi, Gisi, Gentilli, and last of all, Savigny, where he learned what I have already informed you of.

It is not difficult to find a person who belongs to the Administration of the Law at Paris, consequently my uncle came to our house in a direct line. He had found some difficulties in supporting himself during these researches, which continued above a year; but as the property of *Conspirators*, *suspected Persons*, and *Modérés*, had become the patrimony of pure Patriots, my uncle made his way into every house the appearance of which he liked; and the proprietors were either *Conspirators*, or *Modérés*, according to the table they kept, or the property, more or less, with which their coffers were stowed.

After the first effusions of joy had subsided, my father, who was neither a *Lanterner*, *Sabrer*, *Gillotiner*, *Denouncer*, *Robber*, or, what is as bad as any of them, a *Stock-jobber*, and who was extremely anxious to see the string of ears, as well as the formidable hero who bore them, safe out of his house, immediately proceeded to his writing-

* These words, as well as several others, which I shall adopt, in order to avoid circumlocution, the reader will in vain search for in an English Dictionary; but I think no one can well mistake their meaning.

desk, and made out the account of what he owed my uncle, with the interest upon interest for thirty years. The result of this account was our absolute ruin. My father might have taken advantage of the right of prescription ; he might at least have reimbursed himself in assignats, as many a rogue has done ; but then he would not have preserved his purity in the midst of the general corruption.

While he was calculating, my mother was using her efforts to inspire my uncle with a disgust for his costume and his string of ears ; but his long captivity had soured his temper, age had added to the severity of his character, and it was not possible to divert him from what he had once resolved. The ears were those of the Monks that had fallen in his way ; and whenever he met a Monk, he had determined to knock him on the head, and add his ears to his collection ; he had sworn it, and not all the powers of heaven and earth should persuade him to forego his oath. As to his dress, it was that of the most distinguished Patriots ; it was his dress to which he owed the friendship of Marat, Robespierre, and many others who familiarly took him by the hand.

" But my brother, do you think these men love you ? "

" Not at all ; but they have need of me ; and I flatter them, because I have need of their protection."

" There it is," observed my father. " In revolutions every one is actuated solely by motives of self-interest ; and the men they employ as their instruments, they afterwards destroy as soon as they have obtained their ends of them."

" I understand, as well as another, how to labour for my own advantage, and 'sdeath ! no one shall ever destroy me !"

" I hope not ! Sir !"

"Hope not! I am sure of it!—I will reach fortune by a way such insipid rascals will be afraid to follow me."

"What way is that, Sir?"

"The path of honour:—I am still Thomas, and I still possess courage and strength."

"But why should you wantonly expose yourself?" continued my father, presenting his account to my uncle; "here, Sir, is more than is sufficient to enable you to live in comfort."

"What's that—what's that?"

"An account of the money I owe you."

"How much does it amount to?"

"To fifty-two thousand livres."

"And pray how much will you have left behind?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing!" exclaimed Thomas, tearing the account to pieces, and throwing them in my father's face, "learn, brother-in-law, that a man may cut off a Monk's ears, plunder his enemies, and still allow his sister and her husband sufficient to live on.—Let me have twelve thousand franks within twenty-four hours—it is more than is necessary to enable me to get myself killed, or gain a million; I leave you the remainder, and much good may they do you!"

My father returned no answer. My uncle hurried him away to a notary, who at first was terrified at his appearance, but who cordially embraced him when he had contemplated his soul through the thick mist that obscured it. The act of renunciation, was drawn up, and instantly signed to the great satisfaction of all parties.

I had from my birth contracted the habit of admiring Thomas;—this recent instance of disinterestedness, mingled with a sort of burlesque greatness of mind, entirely subjugated me. Perhaps it is the characteristic of youth to be pleased with

every thing that is extraordinary; perhaps there was in our dispositions that similarity which in mine had merely been softened by education. However it may be, I began to neglect my profession, and I vowed to my uncle a perfect attachment; I found an inexpressible pleasure in hearing him discourse, and his heroico-barbarous style inspired me with a sort of disgust for writing, reading, pleading, and every thing else to which I ought to have attended.

Thus it is with all mankind: they quit an amiable wife for a dressed-up painted jilt, who deceives and laughs at them—a state of peace and security for glory, where they have to encounter cannon-balls—they realize a solid independent fortune, and ruin themselves by lending their money at fifty *per cent*—they disdain their paternal dwelling, and roam without knowing where they shall find a place to lay their heads.

CHAP. IX.

I become a little Hero myself.

MY uncle dined with us for the last time. He had received his money, and he set out the next day. When he entered, my father was engaged in his office; and my mother in the kitchen. Thomas entertained me with the grand objects he had in view, and spoke with that enthusiasm which ever gives an assurance of success. While I listened to him, my figure became animated, my blood rushed rapidly through my whole frame, and, actuated by a sudden impulse, which left me not master of myself, I drew forth his mighty sabre. He ceased to speak, but stedfastly observed me, and tried my pulse.—“ You are born for war,” said he, “ and not to lose your time in study ;—are you not ashamed to be fatiguing yourself with your pen for a miserable pittance, when a single campaign will enrich you, and render you famous ? It is high time you left your mother’s petticoats ; send your desk and writing to the devil, and take a sabre and a pair of pistols : these are the only things that become a young man. A desk ! a desk for such a fine fellow as you are ? S’deth ! it shocks me to think of it !”

This overture was too much to my taste for me to return any other answer than just such a one as my uncle wished. It was agreed between us that I also should be a great man, that my name should be inserted in his passport, that I should join him with all speed, that we should set out together ; and that we should take particular care, in the course of the day, not to let our intentions be perceived

by my father, who would not have failed to have interposed insurmountable objects to my celebrity.

When I was no longer elevated by the presence of my uncle, I felt a sentiment of remorse : I was going to quit, like a fugitive, my kind and affectionate parents, who lived but for me alone ; I was on the point of abandoning them to continual inquietude. If I should be killed, a circumstance which did not appear to me impossible, their hearts would be broke with grief and despair ; but then, if I should distinguish myself—if I should arrive at the highest rank—if my reputation and my riches should embellish their latter days, how would they applaud themselves that I had not consulted them ?—This consideration carried the point ; it could not do otherwise, for it accorded with my inclination ; I passed a part of the night in writing a tender and respectful letter to my father, which I left upon my table, and I amused myself in building castles in the air till sunrise, which was anticipated by my impatience.

I rose, left the house without the least noise, and joined my uncle at the place and time appointed, and we set off together in the Diligence. Our travelling companions regarded Thomas with a degree of astonishment mingled with terror ; no one spoke—Thomas alone had all the conversation to himself. He interrogated them by turns with an air of superiority ; they replied by a mere *yes* or *no*, pronounced with deference. He afterwards introduced politics ; he uttered all the idle trash that came into his head, and the more extravagantly he talked, the more attention was paid to him : they took him for an agent of the Government.

We arrived at Calais on the third day, and established ourselves at the house of M^{me} sieur Meurice, who kept a very excellent hotel, was

perfectly complaisant to travellers, treated them well, and did not charge extravagantly.

In war time no one has any thing to do at Calais ; the people walk about, swallowing the news from the two-and-thirty points of the compass. The arrival of my uncle, whose former exploits the old inhabitants immediately called to mind, made as much noise in Calais as the north wind ; and the ship-owners, builders, and sailors came in crowds to make propositions to him.—My uncle replied that he knew how to arrange his own affairs himself, and he desired them to let him alone.

After dinner he occupied himself with the business that had brought him to Calais ; he conducted me to the port, and while I was admiring the sea, which I contemplated for the first time, and was making reflections on the instability of the ocean, which I took very good care not to communicate to my uncle, he was running every where, examining every thing from the *Long Pont* to the *Portelette*.—“ I have found what I want,” said he. It was a long boat, lightly built, sharp keeled, adapted for swift sailing, and large enough to carry sixty men. My uncle bargained, swore, bought and paid for it ; he had it completely rigged, and began to think of engaging his crew.

As a devotee is difficult in the choice of a Confessor, a prude in the choice of a Lover, a *petit maître* in the choice of a livery, a Cadet in the choice of a place, and a stock-jobber in the weight of his money, so my uncle observed, scrutinized, and picked out the subjects he proposed to make the companions of his glory. He proceeded to every public-house with a bag, containing twelve thousand franks ; he distributed liquor and money, and enrolled such as he approved of. He only made choice of young men ; he would have none who were married, because he was of opinion a man could never fight well while he was thinking

of his wife and children, and I rather think he was right in his notion. He also refused those young men who were in easy circumstances ; because, as he observed, such men were attached to life, while, on the contrary, a wretch, whose poverty made life a burthen, willingly exposed himself to every danger : and I think he was right in that too.

He was so difficult in his choice, that he could not find above twenty men to suit him, and they were not sufficient ; but with his inventive genius, he soon completed the number he required. He decoyed forty of the bravest soldiers in the garrison, whom he persuaded that to follow him was not to desert ; but that whether they served by land, or by sea, they were still in service. However, as their Officers might not have been precisely of the same opinion, a little precaution was necessary in order to deceive their vigilance. It was agreed, that on the day of departure, these soldiers should leave the city, under pretence of amusing themselves for a few hours at a place of public resort, in a neighbouring village—that they should file off towards the sea coast, where the boat should be ready to take them on board.

The next thing was to find a Captain, who would be content to confine himself to commanding the nautical manœuvres, while my uncle directed the material operations. Every one is actuated by vanity; and none of the Captains of Calais would undertake a secondary command. Monsieur Meurice, ever obliging, relieved us from this difficulty. He introduced to us a man, of the name of Duboc, who was no Captain—in fact, nothing but a common sailor ; but who knew his trade full well, who was as brave as a lion, could drink till he was dry again, and appeared in every respect worthy to second my uncle. He consented to be merely the instrument of his glory, in consideration of twenty Louis paid down, and four sailors' shares out of every prize.

Nothing now remained but to provide ammunition and stores ; and these two articles were soon regulated. As they were sure of finding on board the English vessels, cannons, muskets, powder, and ball, my uncle thought it useless to provide himself with those articles. Sixty boarding-pikes, well sharpened, and about twenty inches long, composed the whole of our arsenal.—As the English ships were also abundantly provided with provisions, our stores were confined to a cask of brandy, of sixty pints, and a sack contained sixty pounds of biscuit. My uncle's ship, entirely equipped, and ready to put to sea, cost him just four thousand francs.

They began to laugh at these preparations at Calais ; and when they were tired of laughing, they finished by murmuring. Those who possessed the mania of intermeddling in every thing, represented to the Commandant of the place that it was his duty to prevent the youth of Calais following a madman to be slaughtered. Soon the whole city joined in the chorus, with the exception of the twenty young men, whom my uncle kept continually between two bottles of wine, or two cans of beer, and were elated with the hopes of success.

In the meantime the Citizen Commandant thought himself obliged to yield to the general clamour, and he accordingly paid my uncle a visit. It was not that he embarrassed himself much about what became of the brilliant youth of Calais, but he wished to oblige his fellow-citizens. At the first words of the Commandant, my uncle drew forth the half of a dirty handkerchief, and took out a paper which he had not hitherto mentioned a word about.—“Look, brother and friend,” said he to the officer, “here's what will put your nose out of joint.”—It was an order, drawn up in regular form directed to all Civil and Military Authorities, desiring them to leave Citizen Thomas, an approved

Sans-Culotte, absolute master of directing his enterprise against the enemies of the State, and to furnish him, at his first requisition, with every kind of assistance he should stand in need of, on pain of dismissal in case of disobedience ; and it was signed *Robespierre*.

My uncle had never had the paper read to him, and he had only a general idea of its contents. The Commandant had pretended to order him ; and it was he who ordered the Commandant. He made me write down the names of the forty sailors he had enlisted, and he *required* they should be immediately sent to him.—The Officer made the *protégé* of Citizen Robespierre a low bow, and retired. In a quarter of an hour after, the forty brave fellows entered. Thomas established them at discretion in the house of Monsieur Meurice, and there was no longer any necessity for their stealing out of the city.

I should not, I confess, have been very sorry if the Commandant had put an entire stop to my uncle's adventure. It appeared to me difficult, as well as dangerous, to take ships with no other weapons than boarding-pikes. I thought I should not be much the worse for remaining on shore altogether ; the approach of the critical moment had singularly abated my passion for glory. But how could I declare that to my uncle ?—The nephew of Thomas actuated by fear !—Besides, my uncle was a man who would not have hesitated blowing my brains out with a pistol : and I preferred running the risk of receiving that satisfaction from the hands of an Englishman.

During eight days we were at Calais, we went regularly, morning and evening, to examine from the ramparts the English ships cruising in the roads, to intercept two poor privateers that were equipping in the port. Hitherto he had discovered with his telescope but a few cutters and sloops, of ten or

twelve guns, and he always returned to his inn in an ill humour. It was on Friday morning—the light vessels had disappeared, and were replaced by a frigate of thirty guns. My uncle gave a leap, rubbed his hands, embraced and gave me his telescope to look through.

“ Well, what say you to it ? ”

“ It is a fine vessel, uncle.”

“ It is our’s—let us go on board ! ”

I trembled in every joint ; happily the active joy of my uncle did not allow him to perceive me. He ran—he required the drummer of the harbour to follow him ; he traversed the street to the sound of the drum, and ordered his recruits instantly to assemble at Monsieur Meurice’s house.—He opened the pantry, and displayed upon the kitchen table an Amiens pasty, a Perigueux turkey, a quarter of roast veal, and a Dutch cheese ; he drew from the spit a leg of mutton and six fowls, and from the stew furnaces a haricot of mutton, and a dozen stewed pigeons ; he sent down to the cellar for half a hogshead of Bourdeaux, and fifty bottles of Champagne. They instantly began to cut up the meat, tapped the hogshead, and emptied it with full glasses ; they uncorked the Champagne, and merrily enjoyed themselves in drinking, eating, singing, swearing, and dancing.

For the dessert Thomas sent for a large copper cauldron, in which he poured twenty quarts of brandy ; he threw in two pounds of gunpowder, which he stirred about with his black hands begrimed with filth ; they swallowed the infernal beverage with shouts of “ *Vive la République !* ” — Their brains were inspired with fury. My uncle seized the moment ; he paid the reckoning, took the remainder of his money, and they departed huzzaing and swearing, in order to support the honour of the French flag.

I had remarked, with astonishment, that my

uncle did not drink, or at least that he drank but very little : I remarked, with still more astonishment, that he appeared calm and collected. I judged, from those circumstances, that he possessed the necessary qualities to command. For my part, I felt the necessity of elevating my spirits as well as the others ; and, in fact, I was nearly intoxicated, and I thought myself worthy to tread in the steps of the great man.

Fanchon' la Poussière, the most ugly and most common girl belonging to the port, followed us, exclaiming—

“ Heigh-ho, Master Thomas, where are you going ?”

“ To fight, you b——, to be sure ! Don't you see a frigate yonder ?—I am going to take it.”

“ What, put to sea on a Friday, Master Thomas —you will surely go to the bottom.”

We entered our bark—the sail was stretched—the rowers seconded the wind.—We left the port in sight of the astonished inhabitants, who from the pier bade us a last farewell. We stood upright, close to each other, with our boarding-pikes by our sides, and could scarce resist the rolling of the boat. Duboc stood at the helm. My uncle was forward, almost naked, his whole body and figure covered with hair ; on his head was an enormous bear's skin cap, and a speaking trumpet in his hand. His appearance was altogether terrible.

When we had passed Fort Rouge, Thomas ordered the sail to be brailed, and gave his directions.

“ We shall,” said he, “ be hailed by the frigate ; I will answer. We will stand the fire of the larboard batteries—they may miss us. While they are reloading, or tacking about, in order to give us a volley from the starboard side, we will enter through the port-holes, and do you take care to kill all that comes in your way. My nephew, Duboc, and myself will run to the gun-room, and

then we shall see what we can do—Come, hoist sail, and let's away to meet them!"

"Away!" shouted the whole crew. At the end of a quarter of an hour we were within cannon shot of the frigate.

The English had discovered us with their glasses, and had suffered us to approach. There was so little probability that sixty men, without arms, would attack a ship of such force, that perhaps they took us at first for a cartel boat. However, they were on their guard, and we distinctly perceived the sailors at their guns.

"Who goes there?" cried an English Officer.

"France!" answered Thomas, with the voice of a Stentor.

"What do you want?"

"To take you."

At that instant the larboard broadside was fired, and did not miss us, as my uncle had flattered himself. The mast, the sail, and a part of the bow were carried away. Nine men were cut in two, and a seven pounder had taken us between wind and water. "Board, Duboc, board the English!" and he stopped the hole by thrusting in one of the legs that had been shot off. We threw the dead into the sea, and emptied the water with our caps; the frigate was laying to—she had but few sails set—and it was not easy for her to manœuvre. In the mean time we advanced by means of our oars, and she endeavoured to tack, to make use of her other guns. Duboc made the same manœuvre; he kept himself constantly on the larboard of the enemy. The frigate loaded again in haste, but we were already within half pistol shot. We stood a discharge of musketry, which killed three of our men and slightly wounded six. We were by this time under the bow of the ship, consequently out of the reach of her guns, and we leaped on board. Thomas entered first by one of the port-holes, and re-

ceived a blow with a battle-axe, that cleft his nose, and a part of his cheek. It only served to render him still more terrible. He overthrew with his pike whatever came in his way. Duboc performed wonders. I exercised my pike as well as I could, and stuck close to their heels, for I did not know where the gun-room was.

It was guarded by four men, who, according to custom, had nothing but a hanger each. They demanded quarter. Thomas felt his own blood flow—he poniarded all four of them. Our people had cleared all between decks, and he thought himself master of the vessel—he reckoned without his host. He had only killed the Gunners, Carpenters, Cook, and Surgeon, who were all that had fallen in his way. There remained on deck, and among the rigging, a hundred and fifty men at least; they had closed the hatchway upon us, and appeared to be preparing to set sail for England. We found ourselves prisoners between decks at the very moment of victory. Thomas, enraged at this disaster, called out to the English Captain that he desired a parley.

" You may parley as well as you can through the hatchway," said the Captain.

" Know," said my uncle, " that such men as we are, do not suffer ourselves to be imprisoned with impunity. I give you five minutes to lay down your arms. If you refuse, I will set fire to the powder-room, and blow ourselves and you up together."

The English Captain, as brave as my uncle, replied that he might blow up the ship, and be d——d. Thomas, exasperated at this answer forced open the gun-room, brought out a barrel of gunpowder, and ran for a match.

The heroism of us subalterns was not quite so vigorous as his. We thought there was no comparison between the inconveniences of a prison,

and the canter into the air he wished to give us. For my part, I did not dare to say a word ; but the rest of our party wrested the match from him, and threw it to the farther end of the deck. Thomas, no longer master of himself, upbraided them for cowards, and laid about him with his boarding-pike. He had killed two, and was continuing with such activity, that, in a very short time, he would have been at liberty to have executed his design ; however, they had the good fortune to seize and disarm him : after which they tied him to the main-mast. I assumed the appearance of defending him, but at the same time, recommended our people, in a whisper, to take care to tie him fast. I felt a most infernal aversion to being blown up. Now, when I coolly reflect upon the fury of my uncle, I cannot conceive how it was his rage did not suffocate him, or how it was his blasphemies did not sink the ship.

The confusion and noise inseparable from such events, had not allowed us to hear the cries of a number of miserable wretches, who were shut up in the hold: Duboc at first thought he distinguished some words ; he listened—they were speaking French, and he immediately liberated them. They were fifteen of our countrymen, who had heard the contest between my uncle and his crew, and whom the idea of being blown into the air had almost terrified to death.

They informed us that they had left Havre with sixty-three thousand livres, which they were taking to Hamburg to purchase a cargo of wheat. It was in those good times when we distributed two ounces of bread a day ; for which two it was necessary to wait at the baker's door from eleven in the evening until seven in the morning. The corn-factor of Havre had been taken the evening before by the frigate. The English had forced the crew to come on board with the specie, and had

sunk the vessel, which was good for nothing but to embarrass them in their cruise. Indeed, the merchants of Havre would not have hazarded their cash, but would have taken bills of exchange upon Hamburgh, had they not been conscious that if the spies of Robespierre found out they had sixty-three thousand livres, they would have exposed themselves to the risk of losing 'sixty-three thousand heads, if they had as many.

While they were making this recital, which highly interested us, another incident renewed my terrors. The match, which had been taken away from my uncle, had been inadvertently thrown upon a parcel of faggots, steeped in sulphur, which were used to throw lighted among the rigging of an enemy's ship, in order to facilitate the boarding of her. A thick yellow smoke suddenly filled the whole deck, and the flame broke out at the prow of the ship; it would have been easy to have extinguished it, but it was necessary to have water; and how could we get any, without the risk of being discovered, and shot from above? We were reduced to despair, and I perceived Thomas smile.

We deliberated in disorder, while a different scene was playing upon the upper deck. When the English perceived themselves enveloped by the smoke which rushed out at the port-holes, they did not doubt but my uncle had, in part, carried his threats into execution; they did not like to be blown into the air any more than we did; they were troubled in their turn, and immediately insisted upon their Captain surrendering. The Captain was obstinate, and they proceeded to the same ceremony above, as we had done below; they tied the English Captain, opened the hatchways, and called out that they surrendered.

We were certain my uncle, whom chance had rendered victorious, would not think any more of such a perilous leap into the air as he had had in

contemplation. We untied him with marks of respect, and asked his pardon for having saved him in spite of himself. He had something else to do besides returning compliments. He ordered the English to go below, one after another, and to lay their muskets at his feet. As fast as they obeyed, our people armed themselves. Duboc made the prisoners take buckets and mops; in five minutes there were no traces of the fire, and the English went into the hold to replace those we had delivered. *One nail drives out another.* It was then that passing from extreme inquietude to an excess of joy, we mounted upon deck, where we expected only to have appeared to be loaded with chains.

The first care of my uncle was to cut the cords which confined the English Captain—he shook him by the hand, and made him take a glass of rum.—“ You are a brave man, and I love brave men. Take the long boat and four of your sailors, and return to England. I hope we shall some day meet upon an equal footing, and s’deth! but we will have a good hearty bout of fighting together!”

After the departure of the Captain, Duboc set sail for Calais. We were two leagues off at least; we had but thirty-nine men able to act; the fifteen we had delivered made a total of fifty-four men; a hundred and twenty at least were necessary to work the guns, and we had more than a hundred prisoners to guard. My uncle thought this was no time to make a parade of his victory; he kept the English flag flying, for fear of the cruisers in the Channel. If he was fond of fighting, he was also fond of keeping what he had taken. While we were proceeding at full sail, Thomas ordered the boxes with the sixty-three thousand livres, to be brought upon deck, to avoid, said he, the interference of the Officers of the Admiralty. In fact, the twenty-four hours were not elapsed since the Norman vessel had been taken by the frigate,

and consequently the first proprietors had a right to reclaim their property. I made this observation myself, as a lawyer ; and, to prevent all difficulties, it was resolved that, on our arrival at Calais, I should write, in the name of my uncle, to 'Citizen Robespierre,' stating that people who could not be content with two ounces of bread a day, must infallibly be Aristocrats, and that their money ought to be divided among the good *Sans Culottes*, who had retaken it from the English.

In consequence of this arrangement, every man received fifteen hundred francs in good hard money. Duboc touched six thousand ; and I, in quality of Writer and Privy Counsellor to the Captain, the three thousand which remained. Our fifteen Normans, who had not fought, had for their share the privilege of being killed along with us the first opportunity ; and my uncle, with a degree of disinterestedness, wholly unparalleled, contented himself with the frigate, completely equipped and provisioned for three months, which could not be worth less than a hundred and fifty thousand livres. They murmured a little, but he answered that his vessel would be always open to those brave fellows who chose to sail with him and Fortune ; and he threatened instantly to blow out the brains of the first person who should express the least dissatisfaction at his arrangements. A sailor, or a soldier, who gains fifteen hundred livres in two hours, does not regard trifles. Every one was silent, and appeared contented, and we anchored under the battery of Fort Rouge, with the English flag reversed, and the tri-coloured one floating gloriously in view of the port. The pier was covered with the same inhabitants, who four hours before had looked upon us as madmen : their hats were in the air—they saluted us, and stretched out their arms to receive us. Such are mankind—ever turned towards the rising sun.

CHAP. X.

Grand Attempts.

DUBOC made the usual signals for pilots to come on board. My uncle put his prisoners in the boats, and he left the ship with me and the chosen of his crew ; he left Duboc to take care of the ship, with the fifteen sailors, who, having no share in the spoil, might have murmured at the irregularity of the confiscation and division. We made our triumphal entry, amidst general acclamations.—Fanchon la Poussiere embraced us—Monsieur Meurice embraced us—the girls embraced us—all embraced us. We received the congratulations of the constituted Authorities, the Garrison, the Affiliated and Jacobin Societies, the players, or at least those who called themselves so—some in prose, and the others in bad verse. The Officer of the Admiralty expressed an inclination to take an inventory of our prize. My uncle drily told him that he did not think him sailor enough to venture up the side of such a ship, and that he might fall into the water. He advised him to renounce his whim, unless he had a mind to take his inventory in the middle of the sea. The hero of the pen took the hint.

To celebrate this splendid victory, Thomas ordered a magnificent entertainment to be prepared. A table, with two hundred covers, was spread in the market-place, the whole of which was under the directions of Monsieur Meurice—an amphitheatre for an orchestra was erected by Monsieur Senlis—a ball, not a dress one, directed by Mon-

sieur Ventrouillac. Every one was indiscriminately admitted to dance upon the pavement, and to eat and drink a part of the eight thousand livres, which my uncle carried under his belt ; and if our guests were not composed of the best company of Calais, they were at least the merriest, and had the best stomachs. It cost my uncle a thousand crowns ; but this apparent prodigality favoured the vast projects which he already had in contemplation ; and in the evening he enrolled fifty soldiers and twenty-two sailors, whose sisters and sweethearts would have enlisted too, if my uncle would have taken them.

The next day he employed Monsieur Mauri to print bills, the terms of which he dictated to me in his ordinary style ; and he ordered me to get them posted up upon the walls of Dunkirk and Boulogne,

The bills invited the flower of the youth to join the famous *Thomas*—the exterminator of the English and the Monks. Such was the title he then took, and which posterity, always just, will doubtless preserve to him.

His great reputation, his well-timed liberality, and the hope of a brilliant fortune, soon procured me more recruits than I had occasion for. Faithful to the instructions of my uncle, I only accepted men of experience and tried abilities, unmarried and steeped up to the chin in poverty. In less than ten days we had a precious collection of all the blackguards in the country, divided into a hundred sailors, a hundred and fifty cannoniers, either for land or sea, and a hundred and fifty fusileers ; it was by far too great a number for a frigate of thirty guns, but my uncle had a mode of fighting which cursedly thinned the ranks.

While I was organizing an army, he was occupied with the means of providing for it, and clothing it at a small expense. As he had no more money, he put in requisition all the beds, pantries, and

cellars of the best houses because he wished his men should sleep and live well. As they were as ragged as colts, he also put all the woollen cloth in the city in requisition. He required all the furs and skins of Mademoiselle Lecat for caps, all the linen of Monsieur Brullé for shirts, and all the leather of Monsieur Dupuis for shoes. As Citizen Robespierre had persuaded his equals that they were but too happy in giving what they had, or what they had not, to those who fought for him, the requisitions of my uncle did not meet with the least contradiction.

But as there are only two woollen-drapers at Calais, and their shops are not over plentifully stocked, my uncle was obliged to give his different corps different uniforms. He put his cannoniers in white, his sailors in red, and his fusileers in green ; he had for his own dress a *Cormagnol*, entirely black, powdered with Death's heads and cross bones ; his whiskers reached from the lower part of his jaw to his eyebrow on one side, and a large patch covered the remains of his nose and cheek on the other. Had he been placed before an altar, he would not have ill resembled a *memento mori*.

While the taylors, the shoemakers, the furriers, and milliners were all labouring for the grand requisitioner, Monsieur Lavquerie carved him out a figure of Liberty, which was a perfect resemblance ; for Liberty at that period was not very fair or desirable to contemplate ; and a pretty *Marchande de Modes* embroidered upon a superb flag the words *Egalité* and *Fraternité*, fourteen inches long. She felt some repugnance to working for my uncle ; but she took very good care not to let him observe it, because she was afraid, that after having required her taffety, he would put her in a state of requisition : and truly her apprehension was natural enough.

When every thing was ready, my uncle made me write, and take to all his furnishers of necessaries, bills payable by the Receiver of the District, who pay, or do not pay, just as they think proper. He assembled his troop in full uniform. He made an harangue, in which he very soon lost the thread of what he meant to say ; and neither himself or any of his bearers understood one word ; but his peroration produced a devilish fine effect. He was lavish of his actions, he howled, brandished his sabre over his head, and repeated thirty or forty times his most tremendous oaths, which were better than the finest phrases he could have made choice of. He began his march ; they filed off in the presence of the inhabitants, who, notwithstanding their patriotism, were enchanted at the idea of getting rid of us and our réquisitions ; he received his flag at the house of Mademoiselle Roubies, who presented it with a trembling hand. In order to avoid being put in requisition, she was in her night cap ; but nevertheless she looked very charming.

We carried off all the ribbons we could find in Madame Thede's house, and adorned the figure of Liberty with them, which was conducted in triumph on board the ship's boat, the whole troop all the way singing the Marseilles March. The army embarked in twenty-four others, and were rowed on board the frigate ; the carpenters took down from the ship's head a very fine Diana, threw it into the sea, and replaced her with the figure of Liberty, which from that moment was the name of the frigate.

Those who had escorted us, expressed the greatest desire to be on board at the inauguration of the new saint. But my uncle no longer knew those for whom he had no longer any occasion, and he loosed sail, and sent the Calaisians back to Calais.

A violent character, who has the command of five hundred men, has various precautions to take,

in order to secure himself against those who may be similar in disposition to himself. My uncle did every thing in his power to assure the inviolability of his person, and the most exact subordination; in the first place, he proceeded to the promotion of his officers.

"We are all free and equal," said he, "but you shall all obey me, because I will have it so." He then appointed himself Generalissimo over his troops present and to come; he nominated Duboc Admiral of the ship taken, and the ships to be taken; and me Secretary General to the Fleet and the Land Forces. These first appointments were made without the least difficulty. My uncle also wished to select subaltern officers; the crew vehemently opposed this, and pretended, that, like other troops of the Republic, one and indivisible, they had a right to choose their own Captains, Lieutenants, Serjeants, and Corporals. Things do not always go on as a Commander would have them, and the most obstinate is often obliged to yield against his own opinion. My uncle therefore yielded, and the crew made their choice, and bad enough it was, according to custom; but Thomas immediately found a remedy for the evil. See the third Article of the following Regulations.

The officers appointed, the divisions formed, the posts assigned, the oath of obedience, the oath to die or conquer, the oath not to conceal any part of the booty, and all the possible oaths which cost a set of brigands no qualms of conscience either to take or break, were pronounced in an audible and distinct manner, and with all due solemnity. We then occupied ourselves in drawing up Regulations, consisting of twenty Articles, which I wrote down as the creative genius of my uncle dictated them. The following are the terms of them, as they proceeded from his brain, with the exception of a few words, which I judged it necessary to rectify.

1st. The General Thomas has alone the right of imagining and ordering the expeditions.

2d. The Council of War, composed of the Admiral, the Secretary, and the Captains has the right of representation; but General Thomas is always to determine according to his own discretion.

3d. The General shall dismiss the officers who do not do their duty, and appoint others in their stead.

4th. Whoever shall refuse to obey, or shall lift his hand against his superior officer, shall be instantly shot. Off duty, injuries are not cognisable.

5th. Whoever, at the cry of "To Arms!" does not repair to his post, shall be shot.

6th. Whoever shall flinch either from the gun or the bayonet, shall be put on shore on the nearest coast, with a petticoat on and a distaff by his side.

7th. But as the laws should equally recompense and punish, he who shall first leap on board an enemy's ship, shall have a double share of prize-money.

8th. He who shall strike an enemy's flag, shall have a triple share.

9th. He who shall kill the enemy's Commander, shall have a quadruple share.

10th. The Admiral shall have a fiftieth part of all prizes.

11th. The Secretary shall have the hundredth.

12th. The General shall have nothing for himself, but he may take what he shall think necessary for the service of the ship, and the expense of the enterprises.

For the execution of the six preceding Articles, every one shall faithfully deposit the booty at the foot of the main-mast.

13th. The wounded, who are curable, shall be taken care of, and treated at the expense of the ship's crew; those who are mortally wounded, shall be thrown into the sea.

14th. And, as an indemnity is due to the mutilated, they shall receive, to wit, for the loss of both legs, a thousand crowns.

15th. For the loss of both arms, six thousand francs.

16th. For the loss of a head, nothing.

17th. When the prisoners shall be too numerous, and the ship too far from the coast, they shall be decimated, and nine out of ten thrown into the sea.

18th. When a woman is found among the prisoners, she shall belong to the crew in common.

19th. If she shall grant preferences injurious to the rights of others of the brave crew, it shall be lawful to use violence towards her.

20th. If she excites differences among the crew, she shall be thrown overboard, in order to terminate them.

This excellent little code, perfectly well calculated to get us all hanged, if ever we should fall into the hands of any civilized nation, produced a general enthusiasm among the crew, and their joy was at its height when my uncle declared he would set sail for America. "Every one," said he, "labours for his own private advantage, while he appears to have the advantage of others only in view. We will do openly what others do under the cloak of villany. We will be independent, and pillage all nations, since all nations are leagued against our's. We will pillage, even should peace be made. We will pillage brothers and friends, till we are gorged with gold."

Judge how pleasing this discourse must have been to a set of abandoned miscreants, filled with ardour whose violent passions produced unrestrained desires, who neither dreaded dangers, or misfortunes, or labours, the result of which was to be fortune or death, and knew but two extremes, opulence and misery. I own I was sometimes ashamed

at finding myself in such company, but destiny had thrown me among them.

Towards Cherbourg we met two Nantese privateers, of eighteen and twenty guns ; they spoke to us according to custom, and we thought of nothing when my uncle invited the captains to come on board. He first entertained them, then showed them all over our ship ; he reviewed his whole crew before them ; he told them of the money already taken from the English ; he exaggerated his hopes, which were not altogether void of foundation, or chimerical ; at last, he declared he could not conceive how honest men, like them, could fight to enrich their owners, who received and dissipated in luxury the fruits of their exploits. The Captains agreed in the truth of his remarks ; they appeared to envy the lot of my uncle, but they continued indecisive ; a glass of punch, adroitly applied, was the negotiator that terminated the affair.

The Captains were agreed, but that was not sufficient ; they could do nothing without the consent of their crew, and the majority are not always disposed to plunder and robbery. They returned on board, boasted of the bravery, the skill, the forces, and the wisdom of the plans of Thomas ; they enlarged upon the advantages to be derived from making a common cause with him ; they inferred the facility of avoiding all pursuit at sea, at a time when the metropolis was unable to calm the civil war which raged in its colonies. It was not necessary to use much eloquence in persuading people every way worthy the title of pirates, and who desired nothing better than to be persuaded to follow their own inclinations. In half an hour the treaty was concluded, and my uncle found himself Chief of a squadron of three new ships, swift sailors, carrying altogether sixty-eight guns, and a thousand men, able to make head against an army.

The Admiral's flag hoisted on board *La Liberte*, we left the Channel ; we proceeded towards Lisbon,

always under English colours, in order to avoid murderous and useless engagements with the combined ships of the enemy. One of the principles of my uncle was, never to fight when there was nothing to be gained but blows.

On entering the main ocean, we met with a heavy gale, which I should call a horrible tempest, and should describe to you as others have done; but as you know by heart the terms in which all possible tempests are described, I will merely inform you that the *Phœnix* and the *Swallow*, our two Nantese ships, were so shattered, that my uncle ordered them to set sail for the Azores, the rendezvous agreed upon in case of any accident.

These isles belonged to Portugal, which was in a manner become a province of England, consequently the inhabitants were enemies. It was not prudent to approach too near them; but my uncle, persuaded that the Portuguese of the present day were the unworthy descendants of the Portuguese of Alburquerque, dared to anchor within half cannon shot of Tercera, the most considerable of those isles, where the Governor General resided. Duboc spoke very good English; they had the effrontery to land, after having assumed the English naval uniform, and taken with them the papers of the late English Captain, which remained on board. I did all I could to divert my uncle from this design.—“Silence, foolish boy!” said he “if you go on thus, you will never be capable of any thing grand; and for the honour of the family, I shall be obliged to leave you in some desert island, where you will only have to make war upon the turtle-doves and wood-pigeons.”—He was a man who generally did as he said; I therefore made no reply, but abandoned him to his good or ill fortune. They entered Agra, the capital of the isle; the private sentinels wore English uniforms, and the Serjeant commanding the post, undertook to conduct these gentlemen to the Governor’s house.

The Governor was a good kind of a man, who had been appointed to the government of the Azores, just as in France, formerly persons were appointed to a simple benefice, or a Company of Invalids. Every one knows that the only duty annexed to these employments, is to enjoy the emoluments of them, which is by no means difficult ; the Government of the Azores, very much neglected by the Court of Lisbon, because their proximity to Europe guaranteed them from every insult, might be considered as an honourable retreat.

Signor Almagrida, the Governor in question, seemed highly pleased at the sight of the two protectors of Portugal. In the mean time, as a man in place ought not to abandon himself inconsiderately to an emotion of joy, the papers were scrupulously examined, and the result of the examination was, that the pretended English Officers were loaded with caresses. An inconsiderable circumstance had however embarrassed Monsieur Almagrida ; it was that the commission of King George ordered Captain Hunter to cruise three months in the Channel, and the Azores were somewhat at a distance from that destination. My uncle answered this difficulty by observing that the tempest he had met with at Tercera had blown north-north-east during six weeks they had been cruising in the Straits of Dover, and that notwithstanding the skill of the crews under his command, his ships had yielded to the violence of the wind ; that he had been driven into the main ocean by the appearance of a hundred and sixty French ships of war coming out of Port Saint Valery, and that he was happy at an event which had procured him the acquaintance of Signor Almagrida, whose reputation extended beyond the Tropics.

When my uncle spoke of a hundred and sixty ships of the line coming out of Saint Valery, which was merely a haven for fishermen's boats, Duboc

stamped his heel upon a large and tender corn which the narrator had been plagued with above twenty years. Thomas leaped three feet backward. Almagrida reached him a chair; and as he was ignorant of geography, ignorant of naval affairs, ignorant even of tactics, but a great connoisseur in chocolate, a great amateur of consecrated bread, a great partisan of Dominican Monks, of Rosaries, of the Holy Inquisition, and of the King of England, he listened with open mouth and an air of admiration to all the nonsense it pleased my uncle to utter.

The preliminary explanations concluded, they were succeeded by effusions of friendship, and expressions of reciprocal confidence, sincere enough on the part of the Portuguese Governor. He offered my uncle a supply of cattle and other necessaries, which were accepted without ceremony, carried on board, received by such of our Boulogne and Calais sailors as could charter a little English, and who easily deceived the Portuguese, who knew nothing more of that language than the phrase *God damn*, which they had heard repeated upon all occasions.

Signor Almagrida did the English Officers the honour to invite them to dinner; the Governor's Lady did them the honour to present her hand to them to kiss; Mademoiselle Almagrida did them the honour to play the castanets before them; they had the honour of eating and drinking of the best of every thing; and at the conclusion of all these honours, my uncle sent Duboc on board, after having given him his lesson.

As soon as dinner was over, Thomas proposed to the Governor to take a walk in the town of Agra, because, as he observed, exercise was necessary to promote digestion; but in truth that he might have an opportunity of observing the strong and weak points of attack. The old Portuguese Officer, who

would have been reduced to despair, had an English Officer been ill of indigestion at Agra, made three or four turns round the ramparts. Dismantled fortifications—a garrison of five hundred men whom ten years' stay had given the rights of citizens, and who lived perfectly in the style of citizens—an arsenal nearly empty, but a good fort defended by a formidable battery—such were the objects that struck my uncle's attention.

They conversed as they walked, and Almagrida stopped every moment, and explained in all their details the plans he had formed to put the place upon a respectable footing. Here he was to raise a bastion, there a redoubt, further a half moon; he could not want hands to complete the works, because he had five hundred French prisoners. Admiral Nelson had disposed of them at Tercera when he received orders to repair with all diligence to the Mediterranean, and it was perfectly natural that prisoners should work for their bread. The difficulty was to provide the works with artillery when they were raised: to obtain them from Portugal was about as easy as to convert the Grand Turk to Christianity.

What an opportunity was this for a man disposed to take advantage of every circumstance! My uncle, with eagerness and cordiality, offered Signor Almagrida twelve pieces of cannon and two hundred muskets, which he had taken on board a French privateer he had sunk. Monsieur Almagrida appeared enchanted at this offer, and my uncle only deferred the execution of it till the arrival of the two vessels, composing the remains of his flotilla, separated in the last gale of wind, and which contained the articles he intended to present to the Crown of Portugal. The truth was, Master Thomas wanted to have all his forces assembled before he undertook any thing.

It was two days before the Swallow and the Phoenix made their appearance, and Thomas was boarded and lodged at the expense of the government. He was entertained the first day with a grand mass, chanted by the Chief Inquisitor—an excommunication thundered against the French, who made war on the Pope—a sermon an hour and a half long—and a procession to obtain the blessing of Heaven upon the Portuguese arms. To those talents of my uncle, with which you are already acquainted, he united one which you would not have supposed him capable of—it was that of seizing the spirit of the moment. He knelt and stood up with the rest of the congregation; he did not pull the good Monk who excommunicated him, out of the pulpit; he did not sleep during the sermon; and he followed the Host, without laughing and without swearing, into every part of the city; but he secretly determined to be revenged for the tedious hours he was obliged to submit to, and particularly not to forget the Father Inquisitor.

The next day there was a grand gala at the Governor's house. The Governor's Lady appeared, decorated with a profusion of diamonds, which her cousin, the Viceroy of Brazil, had sent her. My uncle, who was seated by her side, no longer perceived she was old, ugly, and lame; he saw nothing but her jewels, which he most ardently coveted. The Lady attributed to her charms the animation she remarked in the eyes of her guest; it was true he wanted near half of his face, he was not very well bred, but he was remarkably powerful and vigorous; and Signora Almagrida did not find an opportunity of deceiving her husband so often as she wished. The present one appeared too precious to be lost, and she thought it her duty to encourage the timidity of the English Officer. She pressed her knees against his in the most energetic manner: Thomas did the same. She com-

plained of the excessive heat, rose from the table, tenderly ogling my uncle with the one eye she had left and quitted the room. Thomas also retired. He was determined not to lose sight of the diamonds. Signor Almagrida was talking of the last judgment with the father Inquisitor; the Signora, his daughter, was attending to a young Dominican, who was explaining to her the mystery of the immaculate conception; the others had no interest in observing what passed, and my uncle arrived at the dressing-room of the Lady Governess, without any one having remarked his absence.

She had already detached a part of her diamonds, which had a very fine effect upon the table. My uncle assisted her in removing her diamond stomacher, and pressed her towards a sofa, which he observed in the room; the lady, continued complaining of the heat, and Thomas cut her laces; her heart beat, her one eye swam with rapture, and she was on the point of falling upon the sofa, when the name of Captain Hunter echoed through every part of the house. The Captain, delighted at finding himself extricated from an affair for which he had no great inclination, left the lady to repair the disorder of her dress, and recover her disappointment; he returned to the dining-room, where he found Admiral Duboc, who came to announce that he had discovered the *Phœnix* and *Swallow*.

My uncle immediately took leave of the Governor, and thanked him for the marks of friendship he had bestowed upon him; he undertook to protect him from the French privateers which cruised in those seas, and they separated, the best friends in the world.

Thomas returned on board, and was attended by the two Nantese Captains. They assembled all the officers, concérted with them the manner and details of the operations, and the three ships entered the port, after having saluted with three discharge

of artillery, the King of Portugal and his friend Almagrida.

They had now commenced, and there was no possibility of receding. In order to succeed, courage was necessary, and that they did not want. It was also requisite to act with a deal of address and circumspection ; the least mistake would have betrayed our adventurers, and the Portuguese battery would have sunk them in a moment ; the dangers of the enterprise rendered them submissive, and obedient to orders.

They landed from the Swallow twelve large pieces of cannon, a certain quantity of cartridges, balls, and grape-shots. Two hundred men, with their pockets full of cartridges, went ashore, each armed with a musket ; two hundred others, armed with concealed poniards, were to follow in disorder, and seemingly only attracted by curiosity.

When Monsieur Almagrida perceived these first dispositions from his dining-room window, he politely sent to my uncle fifty Portuguese to draw the cannon. The marine gun-carriages are not adapted for rolling very fast on shore, and the Governor could not think of suffering his good friends, the English, to fatigue themselves in rendering him a good office.

The Portuguese had the kindness to draw the cannon themselves. My uncle and Admiral Duboc marched before ; they were followed by the two hundred fusileers, and, lastly, the curious poniard gentry spread themselves in every part of the street, and gained the different gates of the city. Thirty of them entered the redoubt which commanded the port ; they demanded, in the politest manner, permission to enjoy the prospect from the point, which in fact is beautiful, and permission was granted them the moment it was asked.

In the mean time the procession advanced towards the grand square in which the arsenal is

situate. Friend Almagrida had not foreseen that my uncle would employ so much pomp about so simple an affair ; but incapable of being behind-hand in respect towards the subjects of his Britannic Majesty, he ordered the *General* to be beat, and drew up his whole troop in order of battle in the square, to the great sorrow of Thomas, who hoped to surprise them in their quarters. Of all the marks of politeness of Almagrida, this was the only one that had displeased him ; he regarded Duboc with an air, which seemed to say, What does all this mean ?

In fact, his position was critical. It was true he found himself in the heart of the place with cannon and two hundred men well armed ; but he had to cope with five hundred Portuguese, who might devilishly embarrass him, if they defended themselves ever so ill. He resolved immediately to strike a panic into them and to fight them before they could recollect themselves.

While his troops were filing off, and disposing themselves in order of battle, the Portuguese flag saluted the British flag—the drums beat—Almagrida advanced with an air of friendship—“ Make ready—present—fire !” cried my uncle. The cannons, the muskets, all were discharged within thirty paces of the Portuguese troops ; every shot told—one half of them fell—the bayonet dispersed the rest ; they threw away their arms, and attempted to fly ; but were despatched by the curious spectators with the poniards, whom the majestic slowness of the march had afforded time to arrange themselves in order. At the noise of the general discharge, those who were in the redoubt killed the defenceless cannoniers, and spiked the cannons. Almagrida was arrested by my uncle himself, who, in gratitude for the noble manner in which he had exercised the rights of hospitality, contented himself with placing a guard over him at his own house.

It is a glorious achievement to take a city without losing a single man, but it is rather injurious to the division of the spoil. My uncle solely occupied himself with the latter consideration during the next four-and-twenty hours. The Portuguese had not entertained the least apprehension of danger ; they had neither concealed their gold or their jewels, and the booty was as abundant as could have been expected in an isle which produced nothing but grain, wine, and cattle, but where they sold their provisions dear enough to the inhabitants of the Antilles, who were in want of them. Palaces, houses, Convents, Churches, and even cottages were scrupulously visited and stripped of every article, except the linen, furniture, and kitchen utensils, which they did not know what to do with. All articles of value were carried off, heaped together in the middle of the grand square, and confided to the care of a guard of fifty men ; every thing was conducted with astonishing order and regularity on the part of the freebooters. They burnt but twenty-two houses, violated only fifteen girls, and killed none after the victory ; but my uncle, incapable of disregarding his oath, ordered the Father Inquisitor and eighteen Dominicans to be brought before him : he cut off their ears with wonderful dexterity ; he kept the Prior, whom he intended to make his cook ; he gave the Procurator to Duboc ; he sent them on board with nineteen young Nuns, whom he had set apart for the use of those who had not partaken in the sport on shore ; he sent the rest to sing their grand masses, and excommunicate the French till they were tired.

When the first cares were fulfilled, and they had time to occupy themselves about others of lesser importance, they released the prisoners whom friend Almagrida depended upon for the construction of his epaulments and half moon :

they forced the prisons of the Inquisition and those of secular justice ; they proposed to the five hundred and fifty men, who had just breathed the fresh air, to share the fortune and glory of their liberators, and submit to the regulations of the Society : the greater number determined with joy, the rest dared not say no ; they were instantly sworn into the corps, and armed with Portuguese muskets.

As it would not have been prudent to have remained long at Agra, they embarked with precipitation, carrying with them half a million of ingots, in plate and money, diamonds, and merchandise. Duboc was appointed to superintend the operation, and my uncle, who never forgot the least circumstance, proceeded to pay a second visit to his friend Almagrida. He received bitter reproaches, to which he did not attend, and hastened right to a certain room, which perhaps you have not forgot. The jewels had disappeared, but my uncle politely entreated the Governess to do him the honour of informing him what she had done with them ; he added, in the most engaging manner, that he should be extremely unhappy at being obliged to put her to the torture to make her confess : his manner had such an effect, that she presented her jewel-box with tears in her eyes, and her limbs trembling under her. Thomas emptied it, and put the contents in his pockets. He then went on board ; he declared that the flotilla being amply provided with every thing necessary, he claimed no part of the booty, but he made me conceal under a board, I adroitly raised in his cabin, the jewels of Signora Almagrida, which were worth at least two hundred thousand franks. The concealment was not honest, and I told him so. " Go !" said he ; " rewards should be in proportion to rank and capacity. Your Alexander, of

whom you are always talking, did he divide with his soldiers the kingdoms he stole? I deceive mine, because I am not sure of them; and I see no other difference between that great hero and myself."

CHAP. XI.

Sequel of our Successes.

A GREAT Hero, whoever he may be, never thinks of every thing, and in that respect he resembles the ordinary part of mankind. My uncle had not reflected that at a very little distance from Tercera, were the Isles of Saint Michael, Flores, Pico, &c. that those Isles, though not over-provided with troops, might, in the course of a day, assemble and send to sea a sufficient number to render his escape difficult. He did not reflect that the English vessels touched at Saint Michael to take in water : he did not reflect that his triple discharge, with which the subjects of his Britannic Majesty never honour any power, would necessarily give the alarm ; happily he had put it entirely out of the power of the city of Agra to afford any assistance to the enemy.

The army of my uncle having been augmented one third, it was perfectly natural to augment the number of his ships ; he found two Indian vessels in the port, which he confiscated to his own use. Independent of the advantage of obtaining them free of expense, and the opportunity they afforded of employing all his troops to advantage, the forms of these kind of vessels were singularly adapted to enterprises which required address and precaution ; they are particularly suited for surprising an enemy. You will judge of this when I shall have informed you what an Indian vessel is.

It is a half galley, twenty-four feet long, and sixteen or eighteen feet broad in the middle ; it generally carries a hundred and twenty men, and

is worked with a sail, and from forty to forty-four rows. When the wind is contrary, or there is any apprehension of being discovered by an enemy, they strike the two masts, and lay them across iron bars placed in the middle of the vessel ; it draws but two feet of water ; which enables those on board to go close to the shore, and even to draw it on land if it is too closely pursued.

As the valour of the new troops had not yet been tried, my uncle incorporated them by thirds among his old soldiers, and he committed another act of imprudence, namely, proceeding to that organization in the port of Agra, which he might have done at sea without the least inconvenience. This operation occupied a considerable portion of the night, and just as we were getting under way, we were struck with the sight of two ships' lights, which appeared at a very little distance from the port. We took our night telescopes, and knew by the signals they were enemies' ships. We repented having spiked the battery of the redoubt, and it was proposed to mount the guns of the frigate ; we were in a condition to have sustained a long and bloody siege, but it was observed that our defence would not prevent our being attacked by other enemies in our rear, and that the event could not but be fatal. A garrison put to the sword, a city pillaged, houses burnt, Nuns violated, ears cut off, were more than sufficient to authorize reprisals which promised nothing very agreeable to us. My uncle did not in the least alter his disposition ; he contented himself with placing all the vessels across to defend the entrance of the port, if the enemy should attempt to force it. We passed the rest of the night under arms, and Thomas waited till daylight, in order to see whom he had to deal with, and what it was necessary to determine upon.

The sun at length appeared, and we beheld with dismay two English men of war, of seventy-

four guns, and five Portuguese Indian vessels. My uncle assembled a council of war, and demanded what was to be done. Some proposed to treat with the enemy, and endeavour to surprise one of the two ships during the conference; others proposed to restore the booty obtained at Tercera, on condition we should be at liberty to leave the port, and proceed to sea;—for my part, I thought we should be but too fortunate if we should be received as prisoners of war, and treated as such. My uncle hastily broke up the debate, observing that the first opinion was the best, provided it was practicable, but that fleets never parleyed; the Chief was obliged to go on board the enemies' ship, and the vessels remained in a state of blockade till the acceptance or rejection of the proposed capitulation. My uncle added that the second proposition was unworthy brave men.—“I had rather,” continued he, “lose my life than the booty we have gained; let every one repair to his post, and prepare to parley with the mouth of his cannon. I will not dissemble the danger that threatens us, but dread ignominy and misery—I dread the barbarous treatment our enemies reserve for us: to escape it, let us fight. Courage, my boys, and fire like hell! I know but how to fight—I will know nothing else. Courage, I say!”—Immediately the rum circulated in full bumpers; every heart was animated, and they left the port, resigned to the worst that could happen.

The frigate *La Liberté* proceeded between the Swallow and the *Phœnix*, and an Indian vessel was at each wing. We formed a close line, and appeared to offer the enemy a regular engagement, in which the superiority of their metal assured them the advantage. The English imitated our manœuvre; their two ships closed; the Portuguese vessels made a circuit round them, in order that none of ours might escape. Each ship reserved

its fire, waiting for the critical moment. We advanced thus within half cannon shot without either side firing a gun.

Suddenly my uncle changed his direction ; he presented his frigate in front, and sailed right between the two English ships ; the Phœnix and the Swallow made the same manœuvre to cross them, one to the right, and the other to the left ; and our Indian boats followed close to them, protected from the enemy's guns.

The English guessed our design, but could not prevent it, because we had the advantage of the wind ; they drew closer, hoping to sink us all three. We had all our sails set ; our troops were disposed on both sides of *La Liberté* ; not a man was at the guns, all were on deck, or on the yards and rigging, each armed with a musket and two good pistols at his belt. My uncle at the foot of the main-mast, encouraged his people, and recommended them to take good aim.

At last we passed between them, stood two terrible discharges on our larboard and starboard, which carried away our bowsprit and mizen-mast. We received five shots between wind and water ; but our musketry fired so truly, and with such success, and the crews of the Swallow and Phœnix so well seconded us in pouring in their fire on the outer sides of the enemies' ships, that their decks were in an instant strewed with dead. We had passed them, and got beyond musket shot without their attempting to follow us. We were, however, in a deplorable condition ; the Swallow had lost her main-mast, the rigging of the Phœnix was cut to pieces, two hundred of our people were killed or wounded, but the English had lost the half of their crews ; our intrepidity had discouraged them, our good fortune did the rest.

We saw the two ships enter the port of Agra ; —the Portuguese vessels had had no share in the

engagement, and were the first to fly. Masters of the route we wished to pursue, we proceeded towards the Antilles, advancing slowly, and repairing as well as we could the damage we had sustained. We laboured at the pumps of *La Liberte* for six-and-thirty hours, but the water sensibly gained upon us; there were already nearly three feet water in the hold. Our Nuns had gone below, and were praying to God to relieve them, by a speedy death, from the illicit pleasures reserved for them; their fervour neither done good nor harm; the shot holes were at last closed, and on the third day we sailed with tolerable facility.

When those who had escaped unhurt, were assured of their existence the next consideration was to attend to the wounded.—My uncle had no surgeons on board; he had forgot they were necessary, or perhaps had imagined that his crew were invulnerable. It was myself who, with the French Pharmacopeia in my hand, exercised the office of physician, as many others have done, at the expense of those who had the misfortune to fall under my hands; however, in some measure to recompence my inability, the Nantese had two young men who could cut off an arm or a leg dexterously enough. They cut off such a number, and I applied my medicines with such success, that none of our wounded recovered. They bequeathed their shares to their comrades, who of course did not much regret their loss; forgetful of the dangers they had run, they thought of nothing but diverting themselves. Our little Nuns were amply feasted, and seemed not much to regret what had caused them so much terror; they only complained of being too well supplied, but we answered that abundance was no evil—an observation which, by the by, is not always true.

My uncle had it in contemplation to gain Saint Domingo or Martinique, in order to get his vessels repaired, and his crew recruited; but “man pro-

poses, and God disposes," says the proverb. A small ship, laden with sugar, which we took sixty leagues from the Antilles, deranged this plan. The Captain informed us that every thing was in confusion in the French Islands; that the inhabitants were destroyed; that the Blacks and the Whites were murdering each other. It was all one to my uncle whether the Negroes were free or slaves, or whether they revenged on their masters the wrongs they had suffered; but he wished for a few weeks repose, and he could not expect it in a place where he must necessarily espouse one of the two parties. He resolved to go to the island of Saint Thomas, where he proposed to enjoy all the advantages of neutrality.

That island, one of the last to the north of the Antilles, belonged to Denmark. Its sandy soil is ill adapted to culture, and it is indebted for its opulence merely to an excellent port, capable of containing at least fifty large vessels;—it is much frequented by privateers, who, to avoid the exorbitant duties imposed upon them in the English and French establishments, go there to dispose of their merchandise. It also serves, in time of war, as an asylum for merchantmen; it is besides a mart for a variety of commodities, which cannot be trafficked elsewhere with so much advantage.

The indiscretion of one of the sailors taken on board the sugar vessel, again changed part of his plan. The man spoke of a fleet of thirty sail, which was to leave Port Royal, in Jamaica, with the first fair wind, under convoy of four ships of the line and two frigates. Every one knows what rich cargoes are on board the English West India fleets; those of Jamaica are composed of indigo, sugar, coffee, cochineal, and the most valuable articles of American produce. It did not require much to excite the avarice of my uncle and his people, but how could they attack such superior

forces ? The merchantmen alone, consisting of more than eight hundred tons, and forty or fifty pieces of cannon, were more than sufficient to crush our whole flotilla. Stratagem might succeed, and it was what my uncle determined upon. He placed our three ships in safety in Port Saint Thomas, and left the care of general affairs to an Administrative Council, composed of Duboc alone ; he particularly recommended his diamonds to me ; he put three hundred chosen men, well armed, and plenty of provisions, on board the two Indian vessels, and departed, telling us if he did not return before fifteen days, we might suppose him killed, and act accordingly.

I was not sorry at finding a truce to my exploits ; our people were pretty much the same way of thinking with myself. We were obliged, as we were in a neutral country, to restore our Nuns to liberty, but that sacrifice cost us little ; they were continually dissatisfied at their lot, and we were tired of them. Our troops spent the whole of their time among the female Negroes, and at the taverns ; a good part of the booty made at Tercera circulated among the Danes ; every one was alert, vivacious, and disposed to mirth and festivity.

For myself, I preferred white to black, and found no pleasure in losing my reason at the bottom of a bottle. I had distinguished Sister Leonora, a brunette of eighteen years old, of a captivating beauty, an angelic figure, and an excellent disposition. She had submitted to the common lot of her companions, and I could not impute it to her as a crime. Lucretia herself must have done the same. I had not even dared to attempt rescuing her from the multiplied injuries she suffered ; the regulation was positive, and at the least altercation between the crew and myself, my uncle would, without mercy, have ordered her to be thrown overboard. I suffered much on her account, but I was resolved to keep

her to myself, if possible, when we arrived at Saint Thomas. I made propositions to her, which she listened to with a favourable ear. She had never loved—my mild and gentle manners determined her. I obtained the consent of my companions that I should enjoy the absolute right to her, and I took her as men daily take a widow of many husbands.

Dubourg, the Captain of the Swallow, grew tired of the Negro wenches, and publicly married an English girl, who had, but voluntarily on her part, a succession of different husbands. What her present one said, returning from Church, deserves to be reported :—“ I do not call you to an account for what’s past—you were not mine ; but if you play me the least slippery trick in future, this,” said he, striking his musket, “ shall do your business.”

Eleven days had elapsed since the departure of my uncle. On the twelfth two English ships came, and anchored close to our’s. Friends and enemies live at Saint Thomas’s Island in the most perfect good understanding, because the Governor knows how to make his neutrality respected. We paid not the least attention to these new neighbours, but continued smoking and laughing, when we perceived my dear uncle, and all his people on board them.—“ Good news !—good news !”—he exclaimed, “ two millions at least !”

Such was his first salute.

Immediately exclamations of joy burst forth on every side ; we ran and pressed round—the contest was, who should first embrace General Thomas. He was conveyed in triumph to the tavern ashore, and magnificently entertained. We drank huge goblets, while Thomas related the details of his expedition.

He had set out with a fresh gale, leaving the Caribbee Islands to his right, and sailed at the rate of nine knots an hour towards Porto Rico. The next day he found himself a league from Saona, a

small island to the south of the Spanish possessions of Saint Domingo. He reckoned upon arriving by the evening at the French part of that island ; but a Spanish squadron, which was constantly cruising in those seas to intercept smugglers, suddenly appeared on his stern at the Point de l'Espada, and gave him chase. Thomas was not strong, and victory would not have been worth a piastre. He stretched all his canvass, and made his rowers exert themselves ; but the enemy gained considerably upon him, and he had no resource but that of throwing himself on the Spanish coast.

Covered by the Island of Saona, he entered the River Quibo, furled his sails, lowered his masts, and drew his boats among the mangroves—sea plants that grow very high, and are in great abundance on both sides of the mouth of that river. He pulled up a quantity of them, with which he covered his boats and men, and waited in sullen silence till night came, to put to sea.

They had passed part of the day in this manner, when one of the sentinels, who had been set to watch, up to his neck in the water, gave notice he had seen an Indian vessel stop, and speak to a man on horseback, and that it appeared those on board meant to draw it on shore. Thomas made the sentinel come on board, and throw into the water the mangroves that covered him, which the sun had already dried ; he pulled up fresh ones, stooped down with his people in the boats, and continued to observe the most profound silence.

It was to be presumed that the Spanish ships would pass by, and my uncle had no mind to interrupt them. The cursed Indian boat landed about twenty paces below our's ; the crew drew it on shore, and covered it with mangroves, as we had done. Thomas, who by chance was nearest the enemy, examined them through his leafy retreat, and knew not what to think of their manœuvre.

They spoke loud enough, but my uncle did not know a word of Spanish. A renegado Monk, whom he had delivered from the prisons of the Inquisition of Tercera, and whom he had left to the enjoyment of his ears, in favour of his apostacy, crept close up to him, and served him as an interpreter.

"If they enter this river," said a Spaniard, "it is impossible for them to discover us."

"It was very fortunate," continued another, "that they were seen by our flotilla, and more fortunate still that a canoe was detached to inform us."

"By Saint James," replied a third, "all that would have been of no use, if couriers had not been despatched to the neighbouring rivers. They reached us in good time; an hour later, and we should have been out to sea, where we must inevitably have met with those madmen."

"No doubt of it; therefore the wisest plan is to remain here all night. In the morning we will proceed up the river, and, in order to leave nothing to chance, I will send the gold by land to Samana."

"Ah, rascals! you have got gold, have you," said my uncle to himself; "depend upon it, it shall not go to Samana."

Nothing could have been easier than to have reduced these Spaniards by open force. It was not even probable, if they were suddenly attacked, that they would oppose the least resistance; but a certain number might escape, who, dispersing on every side, would not fail to spread the alarm; the flotilla might not be far from the coast, and then they would find themselves within two fires; it was therefore necessary, in order to obtain the gold without inconsiderately exposing themselves, to surprise and destroy every one of the enemy.

My uncle was too near the Spaniards for his followers to make the least movement without being seen or heard. His other boat was about thirty paces below ; he left the one he was in—he glided gently between the branches, creeping upon his hands and knees, and concealed by the mangroves which surrounded him.

The Spaniards had also placed a sentinel by the water side, and as it was impossible to see through the leaves, my uncle suspected no danger. He had not proceeded six steps from his boat, when a dog turned towards him with his nose to the wind, and his tail as stiff as a pointer's. Thomas then suspected something ; but the most dangerous enemy at that moment was the dog, which might have barked. Happily for my uncle, he did not scent a Maroon negro, or an original inhabitant of America, whom the Spanish dogs hunt as ours do the wild boar, or the stag. He offered the animal a bit of biscuit ; it approached. Thomas seized it by the neck, and strangled it without its making the least noise.

It was clear the path the dog had traced among the mangroves led right to the sentinel. He followed the direction, shaking the branches to the right and left, to imitate the rustling produced by the dog. He soon perceived the legs of the Spaniard, who was sitting with his musket by his side. Thomas made a circuit to take him behind ; and seizing him by the hair of his head, killed him on the spot with the but-end of his pistol.

After his expedition he came to his second boat, and made the crew get out with precaution, and with the utmost silence. Still stooping down among the mangroves, they proceeded slowly, and in good order, towards the shore ; they filed away behind the rocks, and advanced within fifty paces of the Spaniards, who relied upon the vigilance

of their sentinel, and continued conversing without restraint.

A few simple reflections had decided my uncle's plan of attack. He had judged that if he was seen by the enemy, the fugitives would infallibly make their escape up the river, and it was his object to cut off their retreat. If contrary to all expectation, they fled towards the sea, they would fall into the hands of those who were in his other boat, and it would have been difficult for any of them to have escaped.

An obstacle, not only unforeseen, but impossible to be foreseen, stopped my uncle in his progress. The nature of the ground was not the same, and it was necessary to march full twenty paces exposed to the enemy, before they could reach the mangroves ; and their red, black and white uniforms must have struck the least attentive eye. He made his people halt ; he marched back with thirty of the most vigorous, and returned lower down than the place from whence he had set out ; they tore up a considerable quantity of the plants, and made them into thirty bundles, which they carried to the place where the others were waiting for them ; they formed a kind of hedge, which fifteen men carried before them, and by which the whole of the troop was concealed.

If the Spaniards themselves had not been covered, they must doubtless have remarked this walking grove ; but enveloped as they were among the branches, and surrounded with objects of the same colour, which the distance prevented them from particularly distinguishing, they could not have perceived the stratagem, without infinitely more attention than they had thought it worth while to bestow as to what was passing above where they were ; they were only apprehensive of enemies below towards the sea.

My uncle and his people proceeded in this manner to the bank of the river, where it was necessary again to creep along on all fours ; the nearer they approached the Spaniards, the greater was their ardour, and the greater were the precautions they adopted. They crawled upon their bellies, scarce daring to move the mangroves ; they held their breath, stopped, listened, and again advanced ; they were bedewed with sweat, exhausted with fatigue, and parching with thirst ; the greater part of them had their hands and knees torn, but the gold was within a few yards of them, and they neither felt pain or want.

The boat was surrounded before the Spaniards had the least suspicion of it ; they were half of them asleep. The signal agreed upon was a clap of the hands, which my uncle was to give. When he thought his people was ready, he gave the signal ; they all started up at once, the branches were torn aside, the poniards went to work, the blood flowed, every one of them bit the dust, and the gold was obtained.

It was in ingots, to the value of three hundred thousand francs, which they were conveying to Samana. Ever since the Spaniards had been at war with the French, they had never sent their galleons from the Continent ; the gold was embarked in different quantities on board the small vessels, which could easily escape the pursuit of privateers ; they assembled at Samana, Porto Rico, and the Island of Cuba, where they waited the arrival of the West India fleet, in which it was conveyed to Europe.

The prize my uncle had gained was carried on board his vessel, the dead bodies of the Spaniards were covered with mangroves, and the French only thought of getting off undiscovered ; they launched their boats again, and spread their sails. They left the river Quibo at dusk, as they had expected, but laden with riches, which they had not expected ;

and they had revenged, without knowing it, the Indian blood, which had been sacrificed in streams at the shrine of that metal.

To avoid the Spanish Squadron, which probably was seeking my uncle in the direction he had appeared to take, he thought proper to return to the Point de l'Espada. He passed by Porto Rico, proceeded by the Island of Saint Domingo, by Samana, Port Plata, and Turtle Island, and arrived without any disastrous event at the Point of Cape Mayesi, the nearest part of the Island of Cuba to Saint Domingo, where the West India fleet must necessarily pass. The arm of the sea which separates the two islands, is about twenty leagues across ; but the English, the enemies of France, and at that time the Allies of Spain, though I know not why, had left the part of the Strait nearest the Island of Saint Domingo, and had proceeded towards that of Cuba.

To avoid disputes with the Spanish islanders, my uncle had hoisted their flag while he was passing by Cape Mayesi. Keeping the sea by day to observe what was passing, and returning at night to sleep in peace under a steep coast, he waited till Fortune, whose spoiled child he was, I know not why either, should overwhelm him with new favours.

On the sixteenth day that fleet, so long expected, appeared like a forest covering the ocean. The four ships of the line were sailing to the right to defend the convoy on the Saint Domingo side ; one frigate kept ahead, and the other was astern, the better to protect the heavy laden vessels, and those which were not such good sailors as the others, and were scarce able to keep up with the main body of the fleet. My uncle steered right through the enemy, as if he had been going from Cuba to Porto Rico. When he approached the centre of the floating castles, the least of which was twenty feet

higher out of water than his Indian boats, he was hailed according to custom. The renegado Monk answered that they were Spaniards, laden with cotton for Porto Rico. They asked why their crews were so numerous? The Monk replied that it was in order to defend themselves against the French cruisers who had pillaged the Portuguese and Spaniards of Saint Domingo, and had retired, as it was reported to Turtle Island.

The Officer, who commanded the convoy, had in fact met the Spanish squadron which had given chase to my uncle; he had learned the details of the *coup de main* at Quibo; and as there was but a small maritime force in any of the English possessions, he thought it would be to the interest of commerce to destroy any enemy which might daily become stronger. He made a signal for the frigate astern to proceed to Turtle Island, and attack the French privateers, and then to join the convoy at sea, which of course could not sail so fast as a single light ship.

The answer of the Renegado, which was entirely chance, was of singular service to my uncle. If the frigate had preserved its position, it would have been impossible to have attempted any thing; its absence gave him hopes. However, he could attempt nothing till night; the fleet, it was true, sailed at great distances from each other, but they were always within sight and always within the reach of assistance.

Some pretext was necessary to enable my uncle to pass the rest of the day in the centre of the English, and he could not think of any. He slackened sail, and suffered the rear of the convoy to come up with him, and at the risk of being overset, entangled the masts of his two boats in the bowsprits of the two hinder vessels. The English sailors, smiling at the awkwardness of the pretended Spaniards, shifted their helms; but notwithstanding this attention, which was dictated by humanity,

the masts were carried by the board. It was the very thing he wished. Instantly they quitted their oars, and proceeded with all the eagerness of people anxious to repair the damage ; they crowded together, obstructed one another and made part of the oars drop over into the sea ; they raised a mast, but in such a manner that it would not stand ; they replaced it by another ; they thus gained time till night approached, and after two hours employed in putting the boats into a state in which it was impossible for them to move, they succeeded in really standing in need of assistance. Loyalty and valour are inseparable. The English threw out ropes in order to tow the boats, till they should be near enough to reach St. Domingo.

It was already night. My uncle filled all his pockets with the ingots taken at Quibo, and then made a hole in the bottom of his boat ; the water rushed in. " We shall perish !" cried the Renegado ; " the shock our vessel has received has loosened all her planks !" The English immediately drew the boat close alongside. Our adventurers leaped on board with all the apparent disorder of persons who are endeavouring to save their lives. The unsuspecting English stretched out their hands to assist them ; the two boats went down, but a hundred and fifty Frenchmen were on each of the enemies' decks : and as they were far superior in point of numbers, they obtained possession of the two vessels without shedding a drop of blood.

Neither the English or any one would have imagined that three hundred men on board two miserable barks would have attacked a fleet which contained five thousand sailors and soldiers, and fifteen hundred pieces of artillery. Besides, the nature of those barks had added to their security ; the Spaniards and the Portuguese are the only nations which make use of them : thus, when pistols

were suddenly clapped to their heads, their surprise was such, that they had not a thought of defending themselves.

The first care of my uncle, after having secured the English, was to furl his sails, in order to remain where he was, and give the fleet time to get to a sufficient distance. He passed the night in this manner, and at daybreak, seeing nothing more of the enemy, he took the most direct route to Saint Thomas's Island, proud of the two prizes, which assured twelve thousand franks at least to the lowest of his people.

My uncle had signals on board intelligible enough to the Republican Marine; but he knew nothing of those of the English, and he had no doubt of the destination of the frigate which had been detached from the fleet. It was however absolutely necessary to pass before Turtle Island; and just as he came within sight of it, he met the frigate, which, not having been able to discover the French cruisers, was crowding sail to join the convoy. My uncle had not the least wish to lose time, or waste powder; he was however obliged to pass.

The frigate immediately recognised the two West Indiamen, and the Captain unable to conceive how they could be holding that course, approached in order to ascertain the reason. My uncle informed him by a discharge of cannon, that the indigo and cochineal had changed masters. The English frigate bravely answered the salute, and my uncle made a signal to place her between two fires, and board her. They cannonaded a long while without being able to grapple. The two prizes of my uncle were pierced for forty guns, but only carried thirty. Our artillery, however, was very superior to that of the frigate, though not so well served, because most of our cannoniers were at Saint Thomas's; they fought so close, that nearly

every one of our bals told. The enemy had almost as many men as our two vessels, and they made a desperate defence ; but a third of the crew were employed at the guns, which afforded our musketry a real advantage. The English lost numbers of their men ; their rigging was destroyed, yet they refused to strike. In the mean time their fire slackened, and Thomas, the obstinate Thomas, foaming with rage, made a last effort to board, and succeeded. He leaped on the deck, hatchet in hand, and ran to the Captain, who, with a calm countenance, awaited death at his post. He had aimed the fatal blow. What was his surprise ? He recollect ed the same officer, whose ship he had taken within sight of Calais, whom he had restored to liberty, and whose name and papers had assisted him in surprising Agra. He immediately protected him from injury, and ordered his people, enraged at such a long resistance, but ever obedient to his command, to cease the carnage. Hunter was conquered a second time, but he had been vanquished like a hero, and his defeat honoured him.

He could not be altogether insensible to the procedure of my uncle ; but that humour inseparable from so fatal an event, and a sort of national pride which never abandons an Eglishman, drew from him some severe observations. He gave Thomas to understand that he only owed his victory to the superiority of his forces.

" Let us begin again," said the latter, haughtily ; " I give you my word of honour that only one of my ships shall fight, and that I will not put more people on board her than you have in your's."

" You have saved my life," answered Hunter, mildly, " and I should be a wretch to attempt your's."

" Go, then, you are free a second time ; take the English I have made prisoners, repair your frigate,

and meet me some day when you will be under no obligation to me.

"I admire that man greatly," added my uncle, turning to his people; "he fights as well as myself, but he is not so fortunate."

It is necessary I should make you acquainted with Captain Hunter. About thirty years of age, handsome as Adonis, powerful as Hercules, possessed of the valour and experience of Ruiter, or Duguai-Trouin, and constantly the favourite of Fortune when he was not engaged against my uncle, he had obtained the esteem of his country, and the heart and hand of a charming lady, with whom he had married much in the same way as Seymour and Fanny. We shall return to them anon, I promise you.

From Turtle Island to Saint Thomas's nothing happened which merited the attention of an audience so respectable as that my uncle was addressing; he therefore abridged his recital, which was followed by plaudits, almost bordering upon frenzy.

In their first enthusiasm they prayed, they entreated him to keep the gold he had taken at Quibo. He accepted the offer without a moment's hesitation, but engaged to take nothing for the expense of his first expedition; and, s'death! well he might. We had sufficient for a three months' voyage, without reckoning the warlike stores and provisions taken on board the two English vessels.

CHAP. XII.

Establishment at the Isle of Fernandez.

WHILE we were selling our merchandise at St. Thomas's, doubtless much cheaper than in Europe, but at the same time with celerity; and for ready money, I hinted to my uncle, over whom I had not quite such an ascendancy as my father, but who nevertheless sometimes listened to my advice, that the five hundred thousand francs he possessed were sufficient for a man who was fifty years of age; that adding to it the produce of the sale of *La Liberté*, thoroughly repaired, and abundantly provided with every thing, he might be one of the richest private individuals in France. I had my reasons for speaking in this manner. I was possessor of about fifty thousand francs. I daily attached myself more and more to sister Leonora, and Love had extinguished my thirst for adventures.

My uncle, who was not in love, opposed my arguments, observing, that Fortune was variable, and it was necessary to follow her while she was in the humour. He assured me that her humour had just begun to declare in his favour, and he would not quit her till he had at least seven or eight millions; and this was the mode in which he reckoned upon disposing of it. "As I drink hard, and am almost worn out with fatigue, I cannot have above ten years to live; I shall therefore spend five hundred thousand francs a year; I will die at the end of the tenth year, without care, and without regret. You may add the remains of my strong box to what you have in your own, and"—

"But, uncle, suppose you should live fifteen years?"

"That cannot be."

"But suppose it should happen?"

"Well, when my money is gone, I will blow my brains out."

"What senseless reasoning!"

"The devil take me but I begin to think you will make as good a parson as your father! Silence! and let me hear no more of such stuff."

"One word more, I entreat you."

"Well, let us hear that word."

"Do you not wish to return to France?"

"No; the air of that country does not agree with those who have plenty of money."

"Do you approve of settling in one of the French colonies?"

"No; I do not choose to be knocked on the head for speaking my sentiments."

"The English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch settlements are shut against you; you have no port free but that of St. Thomas, and you will not be able to return there thrice."

"Why not?"

"Because the mischief you have committed, and still mean to commit, will league every nation against you."

"So much the better."

"So much the worse. Formidable fleets will lay in wait for you here, or block you up there. Would it not be much more simple, since you are possessed of the demon of battle, to establish yourself in some island, to fortify yourself, and live there during periods of danger, by means of the magazines you will be able to form!"

"You are right—s'death! you recall to my mind a dream I had on the eve of a certain day, when I went to demand of the Minister of Marine the

command of a ship, which he refused me. You was not then born. I imagined myself a King, and during the thirty years I lived like a mole interred in a Capuchin dungeon. I, of course, could not consider it in any other light than as a dream : at present I can realize it—I will become King of my island :—what say you to it ?”

“ Stop a moment ; you must change the word ; it sounds well, but it will be dreadfully offensive to our Frenchmen.”

“ It is true the word is somewhat out of date, and that these fellows love novelty. What then shall I be called ?”

“ Why I think *Protector* will do very well.”

“ No ; that title is as common as paper money.”

“ What say you to *Dictator* ?”

“ I am told that is Robespierre’s title, and I would not resemble such a man in any respect ; he was only indebted for his short-lived celebrity to the sudden panic by which the Parisians were impressed, and the absolute insignificance of his colleagues.”

“ Will you be called *Grand Governor* ?”

“ Fie ! there is no harmony in that phrase.”

“ *Grand Regulator*, then ?”

“ Yes ; that will do very well—it fills the mouth, and sounds loftily. Now let us consider what island I shall regulate.”

I opened the General History of Voyages and Travels ; I searched, I ransacked, I examined, I reflected. Behold my uncle’s secretary arbiter of the kingdom intended to be founded, and the rival of Idomeneus, founder of Salentum—Dido, foundress of Carthage—Romulus—Theodore of Corsica, and all the founders of kingdoms who are indebted for their reputation merely to the success of their posterity ! I found a number of desert islands among the Bermudas—still more among the Bahamas : I even found some between Jamaica and St. Domingo, and between St. Domingo and Porto Rico ;

but they were all situated in the ordinary track from America to Europe, and I wished to secure my uncle in a corner of the globe where it would be necessary to come from a great distance to seek him, and, consequently, where the expense of sending armaments against him would be very considerable. I likewise wished to find out a situation near which the enemy could not procure succours of any kind, and from whence they must be obliged to return, after having shot away their powder, and consumed half their provisions. The South Sea Islands appeared to me to unite all these advantages ; and after some time wavering between the Friendly Islands, the Society Islands, and the Island of Fernandez, I determined in favour of the latter, less distant than the others it was true, but more convenient in every respect, as situated two hundred leagues from Chili, and at a considerable distance from the centre of the commerce of America.

The Island of Fernandez belongs to the English, at least as they say, though they have no more right to it than to fifty others where they have no establishments themselves, and where they do not intend any other nation shall have any—like the dog in the manger. It is a very small island, and, consequently, well adapted for a very small King, and a very small population. The soil is very bad ; but what did that signify to a set of honest people, who thought only of living upon the industry of others ? It had but one river, which could not fail being large enough to contain our ships. It was girt with rocks, and was therefore the more easy to defend. It was then resolved that my uncle should be Grand Regulator of the Island of Fernandez.

As it was necessary to cover the ambition of the new Potentate with motives of general utility, I passed two days in composing an argumentative

discourse, which would have done honour to Gerbier. I was two days longer torturing my own brains to beat it into my uncle's; but he had a most intolerable memory, and an utterance as bad as the President of a Popular Assembly. Like all Sovereigns of the high seas, he determined to explain his view by the organ of his Chancellor. I read, and I read well! I played off all my arguments to the best advantage, and at the end of my peroration, everyone exclaimed—"To Fernandez! to Fernandez!"

Sister Leonora was enchanted with this arrangement; it was clear that when we should have acquired a certain degree of permanency in our new situation, my office of secretary would be at an end; that I should receive my share of the prizes without being exposed to the vicissitudes of fortune, or the dangers of the winds and waves. We flattered ourselves with leading charming lives. Our mutual happiness could not be crossed but by a siege; the siege of Troy, however, lasted ten years, that of Candia full as long, and in ten years one has time to turn one's self about; besides, the siege of Malta had been raised in 1565, and that of Gibraltar in 1778; why might not they also raise that of the Island of Fernandez?

There was but one difficulty, and that was to get my uncle's consent to our union. Dubourg was in the same predicament. To embark our wives without informing the General, would be to expose them; and they might experience the worst of treatment at sea. To conceal them on board was impossible; a man cannot put his wife in his pocket. The shortest way was, to come to an explanation before we departed, and there was no time to be lost—the vessels were just getting under way.

I knew the character of my worthy uncle. To break the matter all at once was the sure way not to succeed. I therefore had recourse to address; I

conducted him to the tavern where I had lodged the little Sister. She was infinitely prettier under the worldly garb with which I had decked her ; but that was a circumstance to which my uncle would not pay the least attention. There was no doing any thing with him unless when he had a full bumper in his hand. I ordered several bottles of Madeira. Leonora frequently filled his glass ; she showed him the utmost respect and politeness ; she took care to fill his pipe, and presented him with a light.— Thomas appeared flattered by her attentions.

“ Your Nun seems a good kind of a girl.”

“ Yes, uncle, it would be a pity to leave her here.”

“ We must pay her passage to Tercera by the first vessel.”

“ Would you wish her then to return to her Convent—you who detest monks ?”

“ No, certainly ; let her live here then upon the money you leave her.”

“ But uncle, dear uncle, when that money is spent ?”

“ Faith, nephew, you seem as if you was in love.”

“ It is very pardonable, my dear uncle.”

“ Fie ! love spoils a man, and renders him totally unfit for war.”

“ But my profession is not that of a warrior, but a writer.”

“ You are right ; but consider, if you embark this young slut, she will be more exposed at sea, than here without a sous ; and you know the rules, since it was yourself who wrote them.”

“ O, but they have promised me to respect her.”

“ Drunken promises, boy ! At the very first impulse of desire they will be forgot !—S'death ! an idea has just struck me.”

" What is it dear uncle ?"

" Purchase me a certain quantity of female negroes, in good order and condition, and send them on board. You may place them before Leo nora as a screen to keep off the north wind."

" You allow me then to embark my little Nun ?"

" Yes, you young dog, since you will have it so."

Monsieur Dubourg addressed my uncle in quite a different manner: he bluntly declared he was married, and that he expected his wife should follow him.

" It is right she should," said Thomas; " but if our crews should take a fancy to her ?"

" I would split the skull of the first that approached her."

" Then I should order Madame Dubourg to be thrown overboard."

" But I would defend her."

" Against me ?"

" Yes, against the devil !"

" Monsieur Dubourg !"

" Monsieur Thomas !"

" A lower tone if you please."

" It is what I am used to, and I care not who dislikes it."

My uncle seized his pistols—Dubourg did the same. We threw ourselves between, and separated them. My uncle was idolized by his people, and his adversary was on the point of being sacrificed to their indignation. Thomas was incapable of suffering it, and bravely defended him from their fury. His adversary, whose soul was incapable of gratitude, went out, swearing he did not care for his life, and that he would have his revenge the first opportunity.—Happily Madame Dubourg arranged the affair.

She had passionately loved her husband on her wedding day; but, faithful to her taste for variety,

at the expiration of a fortnight, she had offered her heart and her charms to a young clerk in the Custom House. She could not depart without bidding a long and tender adieu to her lover. The interview was so far prolonged, that Dubourg, who was in search of his wife, to conduct her on board, surprised her with her clerk in a situation too unequivocal to admit of doubt. Regardless as she was of her vows, he was faithful to his ; he therefore blew her brains out, and with the utmost coolness proceeded on board.

It is allowable in every country for a husband to kill his wife when he surprises her *flagrante delicto*. However, the matter was represented to the officers of justice. The Governor might have arrested Monsieur Dubourg ; but as he was aware there were numbers of cuckolds in America, as well as in Europe, who lived on good terms with their wives and their lovers, he considered the revenge of the cuckold Dubourg peculiarly characteristic of the manners of a pirate ; or perhaps he thought that as pirates had but little intercourse with the cuckolds of regular society, there was no fear of the example gaining ground. He contented himself, for form's sake, with scribbling over a few sheets of paper after we were gone to sea.

Dubourg thought no more of his altercation with my uncle ; but my uncle had not forgot it. His long abode among the Capuchins had rendered him rancorous.—On the second day after we had sailed, he remarked that the Captain had not obeyed certain signals so promptly as he ought to have done. By virtue of the third article of the regulations, he dismissed him, gave the command of his ship to his First Lieutenant, and left him on one of the Virgin islands, with a musket, a quarter of a pound of powder, and a pound of ball. This proves that among pirates, as well as in civilized States, a man ought never to quarrel with his supe-

riors, even should they behave towards him like savages, or like Thomas, or like a number of others I could name, if they were not in existence.

For my part, I perceived by the third day that my uncle was right, when he told me that the promises of our crew were but drunken promises. Those gentlemen rushed upon my female negroes who happily were of a complexion and a disposition to make head against a whole army. My little Nun owed her tranquillity to this expedient; however, she confined herself to my chamber for fear of accidents. I had all her love, and my uncle had all his cares—we were both content.

General Thomas was not a man to cross one half the seas without meeting with adventures. However, as you may be born with pacific inclinations, which is nothing to your discredit [even in revolutionary times, when the devil takes the hindmost—as it is possible, I say, that you may not be possessed of a warlike disposition, I will spare you the relation of the thousand and one engagements we sustained from the Antilles to the South Sea, all of which bore a perfect resemblance to each other. The consequences of them were, uniformly, powder wasted, men killed, and both conquerors and conquered plenty of cause for regret. I will briefly inform you that in our way we forced the Island of Barbadoes, an English colony, the forts of which we carried in five days, sword in hand; that we loaded one of our West Indiamen with a hundred pieces of cannon, a proportionate quantity of powder and ball, the produce of the pillage; three hundred and fifty persons, masters of different trades; and two hundred and sixty pretty women. You will perhaps think it remarkable that my uncle, who was not fond of women, should have so amply provided himself with them; but he wished his people to have something to

amuse themselves with at Fernandez, and he was glad to favour the most prevalent taste.

After having provided what was necessary to render our situation agreeable, he began to think of matters of more general utility. As soon as we had doubled Cape Horn, he made his dispositions to attack Chili. Over an immense extent of coast the Spaniards have no settlements but Valdivia, Conception, Valparays, and Serena. These habitations, defended only by five hundred soldiers, are separated from the other colonies by a desert eighty leagues in extent; consequently nothing could be more easy than to furnish Fernandez abundantly with cattle, grain, and excellent wines, which that fertile country produced almost without culture. There were also mines, which were not to be despised by pirates, though they only yielded five millions a year. But the gold was worked at Saint Jago, situate forty leagues up the land, and from whence the noise of our debarkation would doubtless induce them to convey it where it would be impossible for us to follow. We therefore deferred our expeditions purely of a metallic nature to another period; besides, we had each of us as much gold as we could carry.

Of the twelve hundred men my uncle had left, he landed eleven hundred at Conception Island, near the centre of the Spanish towns. He divided his army into six little corps, which advanced in different directions. Terror preceded them, and every one fled at their approach. The Spaniards took refuge in the interior, with their wives and children, and abandoned to our people most of their effects, which were ordered to be taken on board.

On the seventh day considerable convoys arrived without interruption, which we made all the Spaniards we could lay hold of bear away to our

ships. They sunk under fatigue and ill treatment; they called out for mercy, but we were as pitiless towards them as they had been towards the Indians, whose race they had exterminated.

The twentieth day we set out with our five vessels so heavily laden, that the least gust of wind could not fail oversetting us. Thomas had long taught us to despise fear. The thirtieth day we anchored at the entrance of the river of the Island of Fernandez, which we were proceeding to people. My uncle threw himself into the water, in order to gain the shore the sooner, and contemplated with anxious joy all parts of his new domains.

The relations of travellers are often unfaithful, or at least incorrect. We however found, with satisfaction, that far from having been deceived by our books, the reality surpassed our hopes. The river, the anchorage of which is excellent, ran through two-thirds of the Island from east to west. It was abundantly supplied with fish, consequently an excellent place in Lent. The little mountains, with which the country is covered, were overrun with wild goats—another resource for those who were fond of hunting. The temperature of the climate was delicious—a real advantage to such of our ladies who had delicate constitutions. Not a dangerous animal in the place except ourselves. Lastly, two isolated rocks, one to the north, and the other to the south, each crowned by a vast platform exactly over the sea, and commanding the accessible parts of the island, presented fortresses ready made, to people, not one of whom was able to have drawn a parallel. The difficulty was to mount the cannon.

After two hours' repose, passed on board and on shore, we occupied ourselves with ardour on every object calculated to assure the security, duration, and convenience of a respectable society.

Every one laboured to the utmost of his abilities —every one had a finger in the pie, from the Grand Regulator to the meanest soldier. Thus the Emperor of China does not disdain to trace a furrow with his own hands, in order to encourage agriculture.

CHAP. XIII.

A magnificent City built. Sublime Constitution of my Uncle's Composition.

WE commenced by disembarking the cattle, which were so crowded together that they were threatened with general suffocation. I, who pretended to know every thing, recommended our cows, sheep, and oxen to be folded. It appeared to me that they would by this means manure the pasturages in the valleys, and that they would constantly find sufficient to feed them: that having them always at hand, we might breed them, and metamorphose the young bulls into oxen at our pleasure; and that it would be easy at any time to make choice of the fattest for the table of his Excellency the Grand Regulator and that of his nephew, who had an undoubted right to live splendidly, because all Sovereigns can pamper their own families with the more facility, as they do it at the expense of the public. My uncle asked me if I meant to transform his heroes into butchers' boys. He observed that the sea formed a natural park round the island, and that without giving himself so much useless trouble, he could take his gun whenever he wanted a roast or a boil, and bring down the first animal that made its appearance. I replied that if fifty of our gentry had a mind for a roast or a boil on the same day, and could procure it in the same manner, the island would not have a four-footed animal upon it in less than a decade. This reasoning greatly strengthened my first observations; but great men are generally the

more obstinate the more mistaken they are in their ideas, and our cattle went to graze wherever they thought proper.

All the carpenters, joiners, and masons, we had were first employed to erect a palace for the Grand Regulator. A pleasant spot was made choice of on the banks of the river, precisely between the two rocks of which it was in contemplation to make fortresses: and as the great keep close to the chief, the subalterns to the great, and the lower orders to the subalterns, every one selected near the stakes which indicated the sanctuary of power, a spot more or less adjacent, or more or less extensive, according to the degree of rank or favour of the personage. A gardener traced out the streets —not those shabby straight kind of streets which enable you to see from one end to the other of a city; but those pretty little winding lanes, in which you cannot see above thirty steps before you, where the eye is not fatigued by the regular uniformity of the objects, and where you walk two hours alone without any one perceiving you. Now when every thing is brought to perfection, I hope Paris will be rebuilt on the model of the English Gardens. Then the streets Saint Honoré, de Richelieu, du Cherche Midé, de la Chaussée d'Antin, du Temple, and others, would each present five or six blind alleys which would be extremely convenient to the drivers of carts and coaches, as well as to the foot passengers, would facilitate the circulation of the air, and improve the wholesomeness of the soil, would add to the obscurity of the night, which would be very agreeable to our street-walking ladies when they were returning home, &c. &c. If this idea is adopted, I demand a gratuity for the invention.

The new city was commenced and finished in fifteen days. You may judge of its magnificence by the description of the palace of the Grand Regu-

lator, which towered over the other edifices as the Capitol of Rome did over those of that celebrated city. Four large trees, thirty feet in circumference, formed four equal angles, and represented as many columns of I do not know what order. The large branches were split, and extended over the columns. On these branches were placed four pieces of wood, and on these pieces of wood light twigs were laid at the distance of about six inches from each other and the whole was covered with palm-leaves bound together ; this formed the roof. The intervals from one column to another were filled up with the same branches, properly plastered over with clay ; these served for the walls. On the south side was a door, cut out with an axe, for we had architects among us, who did not want taste. I wished the edifice to be adorned with pillars, cornices, compartments, and tail-pieces.

"Silence!" said my uncle, who possessed a good deal of good sense ; "I command my people because I am the only one capable of conducting them ; but I do not wish to give them cause to accuse me of a vain pride which does not belong to me."

The furniture, of course, was analogous to the rest. In the midst of the building the hammock was suspended, which was drawn up and down at pleasure by means of pulleys attached to the four columns. Under the hammock were a large table and four benches ; and there was a closet large enough to contain three check shirts, three pocket handkerchiefs, a pair of pistols, and a pound of tobacco.

The public magazines, where the corn, wine, sugar, coffee, rum, salt provisions, and biscuit were kept, were not quite so splendid ; but every thing was ranged in picturesque disorder, and scarce sheltered from the damp.

The building, named the Grand Seraglio, was that which occupied the most time, because decency and private convenience required that each of the ladies should have a chamber to herself, of six feet long, at least, and four broad; therefore, as there were two hundred and sixty of them, it was necessary to make two hundred and sixty rooms. Happily, the building, though it was a thousand feet long, was but six broad, otherwise our architects would never have been able to overcome the difficulties they must have met with in finishing it. Enlightened by experience, we added to the Grand Seraglio, though a few months too late, a vast house, which was called the Impregnable, because men were forbid entering it; it was used as a retreat for women when they were eight months with child, when they lay in, and for their nurses. You see that population was encouraged at Fernandez as well as elsewhere.

As we had but the number of hammocks necessary for us lords and masters, the ladies had the goodness to make neat little beds of palm leaves, large enough to receive a lover: they even gathered as many as were necessary for coverings for all our huts. It is true, they were entreated in a manner they could not well resist; and out of gratitude for their docility and patience, we fastened iron spikes to their shoes, which enabled them to climb the trees like squirrels.

They gathered such numbers of these leaves, that there was not one left on the trees, nor the least shade on the whole island. Still the public kitchens, and mess-rooms, coffee-rooms, and drinking-rooms remained to be covered in. As genius knows no obstacle, we cleverly hit upon the idea of supplying the want of leaves by turf, sails, and boats turned bottom upwards, which altogether presented a most agreeable diversity.

We had, doubtless, already done much; but the most essential part remained to be performed. Our

real wealth consisted in ten thousand quintals of powder, which it was necessary to secure in dry places, out of the reach of danger from the carelessness of our smoking and drinking crew. We hollowed out spacious magazines in the solid rock. We afterwards mounted thirty pieces of large cannon upon the two rocks I have already mentioned to you. We had no scaffolding, cranes, or mattocks—none of those machines which facilitate labour. Our naked arms were all we had to depend upon. We obliged our prisoners to slave for us, careless whether they survived the fatigue or not. We knew we could get more at Grenada, St. Domingo, or St. Kitt's.

The last thing to be done was to prevent any one unexpectedly making us a visit. A small fort on each side of the mouth of the river would have singularly pleased my uncle, but time was required to erect them; and Thomas was eager to enjoy himself, and have nothing more to do. We placed the two West Indiamen, and secured them with four anchors to the spots we wished to fortify. We cut away their masts and rigging, formed batteries upon their decks, and set guards over them. In less than a day's labour, we had two redoubts capable of lasting two years. The foresight of our gentry did not extend so far.

The inauguration of the city was introduced by the ringing of our glasses; and the thunder of our whole artillery. This superb city was named *Thomassine*; the rock to the north *Thomasson*; that of the south *Thomassard*; the ship on the left shore *Thomassin*; and the one on the right shore *Thomasseau*.

While the activity of every class was sustained by the necessity of obtaining a place of shelter, of procuring a sustenance, and in promoting the general safety, our order and harmony had not been interrupted. The moment of idleness was arrived,

and it was what I most dreaded. Our people could not be always drinking, and making what they called *love*; and I trembled when I beheld them walking with their arms across. I proposed to my uncle to make a few laws, which should be at once short, simple, and, above all, vigorous. I recollect the best I had found in Justinian, Cujas, and Bartola. I rejected what displeased me. I formed a little code, which appeared to me very clear. I immediately went and read it to my uncle, who did not comprehend a word of it; and the book fell from my hand when he informed me he would make a constitution himself.

" You, uncle : you make a constitution ? "

" S'death ! Why not as well as another ? "

" I fear it will not answer."

" Well then, I will make a second."

" Which will be no better."

" Then I will try a third."

" Which will not last longer than the others."

" Do you know, Sir, that I think you are very impertinent ? "

" I speak the truth, my good uncle."

" No ; you mean to infer that I am not capable. Go get your pens in readiness ; and when I shall have meditated two hours, or thereabouts, upon the subject, return, and write what I shall dictate."

In fact, in about two hours, he called me to him. I entered his palace, sat myself down, drew out my escritoir, and wrote as follows :—

Rights of Man.

Every man has a right to live in plenty, and without doing any thing for his livelihood.

Of the Government.

General Thomas, having been proclaimed Grand Regulator, shall regulate and misregulate just as he pleases.

" You see that at four strokes of the pen, the fundamental bases were settled."

" O, uncle, it's really charming!"

" Recollect, Sir, you are only my secretary ; therefore proceed, without making reflections, like the editor of the *Journal du Soir*, or the writers in English Ministerial papers."

Civil and Criminal Code.

As the only difference among men consists in the one wanting what another possesses, no person shall have any exclusive property of his own.

As Magistrates are useless where there can be no disputes, there shall be no magistrates among us.

As there can be no occasion for prisons, or gaolers, or attorneys, or hangmen, where there are no magistrates, there shall neither be hangmen, advocates, attorneys, gaolers, or prisons.

" We have thus got rid in a moment of what has embarrassed the whole world from the earliest period."

" Continue, Sir."

But as it is the duty of an enlightened legislator to foresee every thing, and as I foresee every thing, I direct, that if a person, drunk or sober, injures another, or strikes him a blow, the parties shall decide their quarrel with a brace of pistols in some corner of the island ; and the Grand Regulator shall appoint four witnesses, who are to see that every thing is conducted regularly and fairly.

If any one assassinates another, he shall be assassinated by the best friend of the deceased ; and the assassination shall not extend further.

"I trust this will be deemed as short and as complete a civil and criminal code as possible, and such a one as has never yet been thought of. Let us proceed to the Finances."

Of the Finances.

As the Grand Regulator has no certain revenue, and as unforeseen circumstances may render sacrifices necessary, there shall be established, in extraordinary cases only, a general and voluntary tax.

"You are sensible that if I wished to impose it as other Governments do, the lands, houses, doors, windows, chimneys, horses, asses, men, women, children, man-servants, maid-servants, coaches, carts, corn, wine, fish, flesh, fowl, brandy, rum, gin, paper, industry, highways, thoughts, and every possible object would be liable to the payment of it;—but such a system would fatigue the brains of our good people. Besides, there would be a perpetual cloud of tax-gatherers, officers of customs and excise, commissaries, sub-commissaries, &c. &c. One half the colony would be eternally occupied in emptying the pockets of the other. Here is nothing of that kind—a general and voluntary tax!"

"Let us see, my uncle, on what you establish it?"

"Write, Sir—upon Respiration."

"Upon Respiration!—ha, ha, ha!—Surely you are not in earnest; it will never be productive."

"O, you are mistaken. My tax is purely voluntary; for those who do not choose to respire, will have no occasion to pay any thing."

"But it seems to me, uncle, that you have already contradicted yourself."

"Impossible! it might have been the case, indeed, if I had made ten thousand laws, or more."

"You say in one article that no person shall have any exclusive property; and now you de-

mand every one to make a sacrifice of that which it is impossible for him to possess."

" S'death ! you are right. It is not so easy to be a legislator as I thought it was ; and I am astonished so many attempt it. Let us endeavour to form a little supplementary article, which you must introduce among the rest as well as you can."

Supplementary Article.

The Government being bound to furnish every thing necessary, the overplus, with all the gold and jewels, shall be laid up in magazines, and every lot marked with the name of the proprietor, who shall be at liberty to retire, when he wishes to live elsewhere.

" Well, is not this article a good one ?"

" A little inconsistent with the others."

" Go ;—our people will not examine so minutely. Let us now think of the articles of regulation ; these require to be well considered."

Of Expeditions.

If you wish the Grand Regulator to maintain and feed you, and intoxicate you with wine and love, you must furnish him the means.

" You see I introduce the matter with a preamble."

Three hundred men shall be constantly employed on expeditions ; and, on their return, shall be relieved by three hundred others.

It shall be their business to take from others what we are in want of.

Of the Armed Force.

There shall be every day a hundred and thirty men on guard.

Ninety shall be employed in guarding my person. The rest shall do duty as patroles, and shall take care our slaves do not cut off our ears. They shall

also take care of such of our people as shall fall under the tables or benches.

For this purpose, every man on duty shall be bound to keep himself sober, and shall only be allowed a bottle of wine for twenty-four hours.

But, as every sacrifice merits an indemnity, they shall live just as they please when they are off duty.

Of the Repartition or Division of the Slaves.

Heroes like us ought to do nothing whatever. All public and domestic labours shall be performed by the slaves.

The Grand Regulator shall have four for his private use; the Admiral three; every Officer two; every six soldiers or sailors shall have one.

Seventy shall be employed at the forts. They shall keep our arms in order, and clean the streets; and, for their amusement, shall hunt the moschetoes.

The remaining forty shall cook our victuals. They will, no doubt, be bad cooks at first, but good enough by the end of a few days, because they will be bastinadoed till their ragouts are eatable.

As there is no good Government without economy, and as it is at the same time necessary that the slaves should live, in order to continue to serve, they shall be allowed half a pound of biscuit a day, an hour to fish, or search for shell fish, and as much river-water as they please.

"This naturally introduces the subject of good cheer, which, in my opinion, is not the least important."

Of the Tables.

The Grand Regulator shall be served in his palace; and, as he ought often to treat his high officers, his solid and liquid rations shall not be fixed.

The Admiral shall have three pounds of beef a day, three pounds of pork, half a sheep, six pounds of bread, twelve bottles of wine, and two of rum.

The Captains shall have half this allowance.

The other Officers one third.

The soldiers and sailors shall have two pounds of meat, two pounds of bread, two bottles of wine, and half a bottle of rum.

Every one shall assemble at the sound of a bell, in the houses appointed for the different repasts, each according to his rank, and they shall be exact, because no one shall be waited for.

The women shall dine at home, because it is necessary they should be always in the way.

Of the Coffee-houses and Public-houses.

After dinner every one may go and drink as much coffee as he pleases.

Twice every decade there shall be delivered to the different public-houses eight butts of wine, containing two hundred quarts, which shall be drank in the course of the day by the soldiers and sailors who wish to amuse themselves soberly. They shall have pipes and tobacco, and may carry away as much as they shall think necessary for their consumption.

The officers who shall not be upon duty, may get drunk every day in a public-house particularly appropriated to them.

Of Cloathing.

Whenever any one's coat is worn out, he shall take a new one out of the magazine.

Whenever any one has a dirty shirt, he shall change it for a clean one.

As there is no good Government which does not endeavour to render all descriptions of persons useful to the State, the clothes and linen shall be made, mended, and washed by the nurses, and

such of the women whose society shall be least in request.

Of the Population.

Marriage being insupportable where it is indissoluble, and of no use whatever where divorces are tolerated, there shall be no marriages at all.

But as it is necessary to have children, in order to perpetuate a colony, and as it is very amusing to get them when one is not at the charge of maintaining them, therefore every one shall get as many as he can, and the mothers only shall take charge of them, agreeable to the destination of nature in that respect.

Nature having designed the women equally for the use of the men, they shall not presume to reject any one. But, for the maintenance of the public morals, and, above all, to avoid disputes, the first who shall enter a woman's apartment, shall lay her cap on the outside of the door, which will be as much as saying to a new comer, "pass on to another."

Paternal weakness being adverse to the mental progress of children, our's will early develope their genius, because no one will know his father.

At the age of eight years, the girls may begin to ogle and coquet; and, at fifteen, they shall commence little mammas.

Those who shall violate any one of the articles of the present constitution, freely accepted, shall be transported to the coast of Chili, and their gold and jewels confiscated to the use of the Grand Regulator.

After having finished dictating this admirable production to me, my uncle, enchanted at his

performance, ordered the *generale* to be beat, assembled the whole army, made me mount a palm-tree, that I might be heard at the greater distance, and ordered me to read it in an audible and intelligible voice. I drew my book from my pocket ;—I roared as loud as my lungs would let me, but was heard only by a very small part of my auditory.

"Aures habent, et non audient.

However, whether they heard or not, and whether they comprehended it or not, the Constitution of my uncle was unanimously accepted, either because it was agreeable to some, or that the mode of government was indifferent to the greater number, or that the others would have gained but little by saying—"No."

CHAP. XIV.

Disasters.

AFFAIRS went on prosperously for some months. Our slaves were worked to death, but we easily replaced them. Our ladies had so much business on their hands, that twenty of the prettiest died of fatigue. We drank morning and evening, hunted, played at bowls, or at the ball, smoked, and slept: it was a charming life we led.

Every thing announced that this delightful course of pleasure would continue. The Swallow, continually at sea, and flying on the surface of the deep, avoided or overtook, as she pleased, the best sailors. Our magazines were ready to burst; abundance reigned; and, as long as the English and the Spaniards took the trouble to cultivate the earth, it did not appear possible that the colony could want for any thing.

For myself, whose taste singularly differed from our gentry, and who avoided all direct communication with them, I had made a tolerably pleasant habitation towards the source of the river. My cottage, adorned with a thousand little 'ornaments' I had found on board the different prizes, was protected behind a rock crowned with verdure; and in front I had a pleasant grove, which nature seemed to have raised on purpose for me. I had not above fifty shrubs to remove, in order to form shady and solitary walks. At the extremity of my grove flowed the river: it was narrow, not deep, but limpid. The most delicate fish of the South Sea came up to my door, and suffered themselves to be caught by my charming Sister. With the seeds

of Europe, I had made a kitchen garden on one side my grove, and a flower garden on the other ; and in one or other of my gardens, or on the river's enamelled brink, or in my grove or cottage, I enjoyed myself with my dear Leonora, who embellished the whole scene, and lived concealed from every eye.

I had been assisted in fitting up my dwelling by the two slaves allotted to me. The one was a painter, and the other a doctor, consequently they were incapable of supporting violent labour ; but I encouraged and assisted them. I shared my allowance of provisions with them, which was more than sufficient for us all. Leonora consoled them. She lavished on them those delicate attentions, the only means in the power of the weaker sex to employ, but which are of more avail than any our's are capable of, and render them, in fact, our superiors. She finished making us friends even before either of us knew it.

I had found and accumulated treasures, by which I alone had been tempted. Musical and mathematical instruments, good books, a hundred things useful to the arts, had been thrown carelessly on the shore. I carefully gathered them up, and was laughed at for the store I set by them. It was with such resources as these we charmed our leisure hours.

The painter, naturally gay, had recovered his good humour ; the doctor, grave, as all doctors are, spoke good sense, and good sense always pleases, especially when seasoned with a grain or two of folly—what with laughing with the painter, reasoning with the doctor, and caressing my Leonora, I passed my time agreeably enough. We were all comfortable. I was loved, and was respected ; and I never desire any better-lot.

But the Swallow, in consequence of having taken so many prizes, was sometimes constrained to take

very insignificant ones, and sometimes she took none at all.

But waste, in a short time, exhausted all the provisions in the island.

But some of the ladies, who replaced those who had died, introduced a certain inconvenience, which, in a very short time, circulated, and gave business and importance to my doctor.

But want and disease produced discontent.

But discontent produced murmurs.

But murmurs, when they proceed to a certain extent, violate the social contract.

But my uncle, who stuck close to the article relating to confiscations, transported the guilty conformable to its letter.

But, at last, his people rose in open rebellion against him.

When the resources of a Government, good or bad, are destroyed, as many different parties are formed as there are different interests.

When neither of the parties will hear reason, they are all equally clamorous.

When they cannot persuade by their clamours, they become furious.

When they become furious they take up arms.

When they take up arms, they fight.

When they find that shedding blood does not better their condition, they make mutual advances towards reconciliation. Thus they end where they began.

They fought a whole day at Fernandez. A hundred and fifty men were killed and wounded, without any one precisely knowing why;—just as it is with the wars between the European Powers. Twenty times I threw myself into the midst of the combatants; twenty times I played the orator, and exhausted all the common place topics I knew, without doing any good. Towards the evening, they began to grow hungry, and had nothing to

sup upon. I took the opportunity of gliding in a word or two :—

“ It is not by killing one another you can make the spit turn.”

The moment I had so said, their arms fell from their hands ; they embraced, and were reconciled.

My uncle, fatigued, and covered with wounds, modestly consulted me as to what he should do ; and spoke, for the first time, in the name of the society.

“ This evening,” I replied, “ we must retire to rest ;—whoever sleeps, sups ; and to-morrow we shall see what is to be done.”

They attended to me, separated, and I regained my cottage.

I had laboured, and I received the reward. Peas and beans, prepared by Leonora, and a melon, gathered with her own fair hands, recruited my forces. We supped, and we slept pretty well for persons whose minds were agitated ; and the next morning by daybreak, I repaired to the palace of the Grand Regulator, who had put every thing in disorder, and no longer regulated any thing.

All those who could support themselves, assembled round me. I led them to my cottage, and showed them my garden.

“ If you had done as I have,” said I to them, “ you might have supped yesterday, and breakfasted to-day. Man is born to labour ; your present situation proves it. Let us see now how you may be relieved from your embarrassment. You are about six hundred. Take your guns, form a line across the island, advance like huntsmen, driving all before you ; kill the remainder of those goats whose skins you have hitherto only thought worth your attention—you will find their flesh delicious. Dress only twenty or thirty for your immediate wants, salt the rest, embark on board your ships,

and make a last attempt upon Chili. If you are determined to live independently, transport what you have taken to one of the Galapagos Islands, the soil of which is excellent ; cultivate it, and, in the mean time, eat of the goat, and drink of the stream. Noah drank the same liquor, before he thought of planting the vine."

It was impossible to make any reply to what I said ; therefore none was made. They set out for that general battle against the goats, which produced infinitely more than what I had expected. Some stripped off their skins, others cut them up, others lighted the fires, others brought cauldrons, and others salt and spices to season them with.

Two hours after, those same worthy gentlemen, who but three days before would put up with nothing but legs of mutton, bread, and white wines of the Canaries or Madeira, tore the goats piece-meal with their teeth, and were but too happy in assuaging their thirst at the river.

I had determined the day before to recommend the same attempt to obtain supplies from the river, as had been so successful on the mountains ; but they would not have given themselves the trouble to have formed nets, and as I had but a few lines, the produce would necessarily have been very inconsiderable.

The following day they salted about seven hundred goats ;—they filled their butts with water—alas ! nothing but water ! they embarked their provisions, with five hundred men, on board *La Liberté* and the Swallow ; they left a hundred to defend the island against a *coup-de-main* ; they put the slaves, who might have risen, and revenged themselves, on board the Phoenix, they appointed the women in health to take care of the sick and wounded, whose numbers were dreadful ; and they placed stakes in all the forts with hats and caps on them, to prevent the enemy, if he should appear, from observing our weakness. The crews of the

two vessels solemnly promised to return and convey us to the Galiapagos Isles. As pledges of their sincerity, they left us their shares of the riches deposited in the magazines. At length they departed, under the command of Duboc, who had not yet commanded in chief, and who burned to signalize himself.

My uncle, wounded, was overwhelmed with despair at not being at the head of the expedition. I was inconsolable for the loss of my painter and doctor; Leonora was sad to see me so; our sick were not over cheerful; our hundred armed men seemed gloomy and disconsolate; the women sighed, some for what had happened to them, and others for what had not happened to them. The island was as mournful as Robertson's *Phantas-Magoria*.*

I, however, found means to recover their spirits by degrees, and dissipate their sadness. I had lost my dear doctor, and I was myself physician in chief of the colony. I followed the rules laid down by my doctor; but what produced as much effect as the medicines, was the establishment of a kind of abundance in the colony. I employed the women in making nets, and insensibly inspired a taste for labour. We had both fresh and sea fish in great quantities;—it was true we wanted sauce, but hunger is the best in the world.

At the south point of the island our fishermen found some turtles. My patients were then regaled with turtle soup, and every one knows the virtue of that diet for persons labouring under their disorders. A regular and frugal style of living effected wonders. My arguments of every kind were attended to, and my advice was followed. They cleared the small quantity of land which was capa-

* An exhibition at Paris much resorted to;—it is a sort of moving Panorama.

ble of being productive ; I gave them grain, I directed their labours, and forty or fifty gardens were formed under my eyes. Industry restored gayety, and softened the ferocity of their manners. They assembled every evening ; they amused themselves without excess or ill humeur ; they returned to the enjoyments of nature ; they heard me with pleasure paint the delights of a chaste union, and the charms of parental affection. The young people found present happiness in my system ; the more mature considered it a sure support for their old age ; all regarded Leonora, and her decent and contented air finished persuading them.

To the infinite variety of functions with which reason alone had invested me, I soon joined those of the priesthood. I did not preach dogmas—I should not have spoke the language of mankind. I announced a simple and pure morality, and it is to that alone revelation extends ; our hearts cannot reach beyond it. My efforts were crowned with the most flattering success. I was the means of eleven marriages. The island was no longer the asylum of freebooters. Its inhabitants, restored to social life, had become estimable characters ; and every one was as happy as it is possible to be, without those articles of life which our self-love often induces us to consider as essentially necessary.

I had conceived the project of becoming reconciled with our neighbours, and purchasing from them what we wanted. The immense riches we possessed might determine the enemy to treat, and if they should prefer war, we were still strong enough to incommod them.

My uncle had been forced to agree that his Constitution was hardly fit to be thrown to the devil. He acknowledged that I understood the art of governing better than he did, but he added that I did not know how to fight. He thought it abso-

utely necessary he should possess some advantages over me; and I willingly left him that. However, as the demon, self-love, is always prompting us, he often contradicted me in matters of legislation, morals, and even physic. I defended my opinions—he was violent;—I let him talk—he swore;—I did not listen to him, for oaths are not arguments.

It appeared to me, that medicine should only be employed to assist the operations of enfeebled nature, that morality was unalterably the same, and that the best laws were not always the wisest, but those only which best apply to the people they were to govern. A first but terrible attack of the gout confined my critic to his hammock, and left me at liberty to do all the good in my power.

It was three months since our companions had left us. We began to think we should never see them again. No one directly said what he thought, but I believe at bottom every one would have been glad. The season was favourable, and I sincerely thought of deputing several of our people to the Governor of Chili. I made choice of the most moderate and the most intelligent. I equipped the largest of our boats, and I wrote a letter to the Governor, which I thought calculated to calm his resentment. My ambassadors were on the point of departing, when a fleet of eight or nine sail appeared within sight of the island. We flew to our arms, and put ourselves in a posture of defence. My uncle ordered himself to be conveyed in a chair to Fort Thomasseau. I was born with a genius for every thing, so that day I was aid-de-camp. I forwarded to every one the orders which the General gave me with his usual *sang-froid*. He found at last that married men are braver than others when they love their wives, and are apprehensive of their safety. My eleven married men talked of nothing less than blowing up the island rather than surrender. Happily, we were not obliged to pro-

ceed to such an extremity. We soon recognised *La Liberté* and the *Swallow*; we laughed at our imaginary danger and our defensive preparations. We threw down our arms, and hastened to receive Admiral Duboc, who entered the river full sail.

That fellow was really born with great qualities—he had formed himself under my uncle. He had wished to surpass in a single expedition what his Chief had done in the whole of his life, and he had succeeded. He returned with six large ships laden with all sorts of provisions and stores. He had augmented the army with six hundred Frenchmen, whom he had rescued from different places, and he had five millions of gold. Behold! in ten lines, the journal of his expedition.

He had landed in the night-time at Valparays, surprised the inhabitants, and put every one to the sword.

He had proceeded afterwards to Saint Jago; met and taken by the way five millions, which were going to be sent to Quito.

He had laid in provisions and wines on his return to Valparays, and taken two ships in ballast in the port.

He doubled Terra del Fuego, returned to the southern ocean, made three descents on the Brazils, loaded the vessels taken at Valparays, and delivered sixty Frenchmen from confinement.

He returned towards the Antilles, forced Saint Eustatia, delivered a hundred and fifty Frenchmen, took two vessels laden with combustibles, on their voyage to Europe.

He attacked Saint Vincent's, and carried the island after a regular siege of eight days, rescued three hundred and ninety Frenchmen, loaded as heavily as possible four vessels he found in the port of Boucama—two foundered coming home.

He returned at last, after a three months' voyage, conqueror of the Spaniards, Portuguese, Dutch and English.

The reading of this journal produced a sensation in the muscles of my uncle, which he in vain endeavoured to conceal. He regarded Admiral Duboc with an air of anger and severity, "Admiral," said he, "you have acted like a brave and able man, but your mission did not extend further than Chili, where you was to have taken provisions on board. You have exposed those you left here to the risk of dying of hunger, while you was rambling about in search of adventures, and I therefore dismiss you.

"Dismiss a man like me!" replied Duboc, in a rage.

"Dismiss a man like him!" replied all his followers. The anarchy which famine had produced, was restored again by abundance; no more order no more subordination! It was proposed with loud voices to transport my uncle or treat him worse. I had my good colonists, on whom I could depend, but their numbers formed a very small minority. I did not know how to fight, as Thomas had often told me, and the gout prevented his putting himself at their head.

In the mean time the tumult increased—outrage was at its height. No vestiges of my uncle's consideration and importance now remained; he was nothing more than an envious wretch, whom it was necessary to sacrifice. Thus perished the Gracchi in the very bosom of their popularity! thus perished Mazaniel by the hands of the same people who had adored him! thus ever will terminate the destiny of those who are indebted for their momentary elevation to popular tumult and civil disorder, which expire with themselves.

The moment of my uncle had not yet arrived. The gout had neither deprived him of his courage

or presence of mind ; it was these qualities which saved him. He desired to speak, but was refused. Our colonists dispersed among the crowd, and, hitherto spectators of the scene, exclaimed that Thomas ought to be heard, and they insisted on the others keeping silence.

"Till you have made new laws," said my uncle, "I cannot acknowledge any but those you have freely accepted. Is it said that when there shall be a quarrel, the whole colony shall fall upon him who has the misfortune to displease them ? No—the Constitution says that the difference shall be settled by a brace of pistols. I therefore defy the Admiral ; if he has achieved what he pretends he has, he will accept the challenge like a brave man, and will not suffer me to be assassinated like a dog. Come—s'death, Admiral ! do you accept the challenge ?" Instantly Duboc, inflamed with rage, shook my uncle by the hand, to signify he would meet him. The ground was marked out ; my uncle seized his pistols, and, seated in his chair, with his leg supported on a pillow of dry leaves, prepared for the combat. The army formed a hedge on each side of the combatants.

What a grand spectacle for the multitude ! The two supreme powers engaged in mortal strife ! It must necessarily produce some change, and every change is a step towards perfection.—Alas, foolish man ! how vain are thy reasonings !

Two-thirds of the spectators offered silent vows for Duboc. My friends formed their's in favour of my uncle. They all agreed to abide by the issue of the combat, and absolutely to forget the past.

Duboc was the party offended ; he fired first. His resentment and his vivacity scarce allowed him to take his aim. The ball whistled by my uncle's ear, who made not the least movement. He aimed in his turn ; he was more collected, and aimed bet-

ter. He broke the thigh of the Admiral, who fell, but without betraying the least signs of pain.

My uncle was borne to his palace, and re-established in his honours. His unmerciful Constitution was carried into full effect. All the gardens were trampled under foot—the grand Seraglio was repeopled—waste and extravagance recommenced ; and my colonists, hurried away by example, soon renewed the ancient immorality of their manners. Obliged myself to yield to the torrent, I champed my bit, but was forced to be silent. I conducted my little Sister to the extremity of the island. I built another little cottage among the craggy rocks, as well as I could, without any other assistance than my own hands. Wherever I found a few heaps of earth, I threw my seeds, uncertain whether I should ever reap the fruit of them. I was ill lodged, ill fed, for the distance to which I had retired, prevented me from going regularly to receive my allowance. But I had placed Leonora in safety. Another reason had determined me to retire to an almost inaccessible spot.

In unloading the vessels, securing the stores in the magazines, and dividing the five millions, they had missed one of the women they had embarked at Saint Vincent's with a number of others. That unfortunate lady, worthy a better lot, had escaped from her ravishers ; she had wandered about the island, and chance had conducted her to my first habitation. Leonora was at the door. The two women contemplated each other. The unknown was as beautiful as an angel, and modest as Virtue herself. Leonora smiled upon her. She was encouraged by the smile, and entered. The kindness of my fair companion inspired her with confidence—they became friends in an instant.

I returned and beheld the unknown beauty. She did not inspire me with love, but I felt the most lively interest in her favour. I advised her to se-

cure herself against the infamy preparing for her ; she thanked me not, but fell at my feet.

It was perfectly astonishing that she had so long escaped that outrage, the idea of which alone was sufficient to make her shudder with horror. The crews of *La Liberté* and the *Swallow* had been divided among the eight ships, which were so heavily laden, that it was with infinite difficulty they could be kept afloat ; and the continual labour their situation rendered necessary, prevented them from thinking of any thing else.

I concealed her at the further end of my cabin, in a recess hollowed out underneath the rock. Leonora was lavish of her attentions. She was soon as much attached to us as we had been to the painter and doctor, and she entrusted to us what she had carefully concealed during the voyage, for fear the knowledge of it should have added, if possible, to the horrors of her situation. She was the wife of that Captain Hunter who fought so well, and whom my uncle esteemed so much. A great disproportion of birth and fortune had long prevented their union ; but at length she had listened only to love, and had presented him her hand without the consent of her parents. Hunter had conducted her from Jamaica, where he had married her, to Saint Vincent's, where his mother lived, and under whose care he placed her. She had written the most submissive letters to her father. He had at length answered her, and she had formed hopes of obtaining his sanction to her marriage, when Saint Vincent's was attacked, and taken by our people.

She wept as she finished her recital ; we wept while we listened to her. Beauty in distress ever excites sympathy. It was partly on her account I had moved my dwelling to a spot where I hoped she might at least breathe at liberty.

Our people never left that part of the island where good cheer and licentiousness reigned.

Mrs. Hunter and Leonora sometimes walked on the tops of our rocks. They insensibly contracted a habit of amusing themselves in that manner, and hitherto no object whatever had inspired them with alarms.

One day they were suddenly struck with the appearance of two men, who had observed them from the valley. Mrs. Hunter returned terribly alarmed, and I conceived the danger which threatened her. I went out, and perceived the two men, who were retiring, at the same time conversing with earnestness, and alternately looking round towards the place where my habitation was. I conducted Mrs. Hunter, by several turnings, to a grotto, which I had previously remarked about five hundred paces from our residence. I desired her not to stir out. I told her I would attend her as soon as it was night, and I thought I had found the means of securing her from insult.

I was not perfectly at ease on my own account. They had promised me to respect Leonora, and they had done so at first, because they had the means of gratifying their passions elsewhere. The services I had rendered them afterwards, had tended to conciliate their minds towards me. The distance of my cottage, and the retirement in which my little Nun lived, ensured our tranquillity ; but there was no treaty existing for the protection of a second wife, who was certainly one of the most lovely women I ever saw. The authority of my uncle might be despised : I had, however, no resource but in him.

CHAP. XVIII.

Conclusion.

ABOUT an hour after I had returned, twenty of our gentry mounted the steps I had rudely cut out in the rock, in order to reach my habitation. I thought I observed among them those who had discovered Mrs. Hunter. However, I did not appear disconcerted. I gave them a friendly reception, and desired them to explain the subject of their visit. They pretended they only wished to see my new habitation ; and while they were praising my perseverance and industry, they examined every corner. I confess I was not perfectly at my ease. Leonora was far more cunning than I was. She adroitly turned the conversation to the subject of the magazine in which the clothes were kept ; she complained of the little care taken of them ; she added that she had severely taken one of the nurses to task who had brought her some clean linen in the morning. The stratagem was successful, and produced the wished-for effect. They retired with tolerable decency, and we thought we had destroyed every shadow of suspicion.

I was inclined to conduct Mrs. Hunter back to my house, and keep her concealed. But I thought the life she would lead there would be too irksome : besides, it was possible our people would again make their appearance, and surprise her.—After mature reflection, I returned to my first plan. Towards midnight I accompanied the unfortunate lady to my uncle's palace ; he was gayly drinking with two of his guards.—“ Ah, the lovely creature ! ”

they exclaimed ; " where the devil did she come from ? "

Mrs. Hunter shuddered.

" You have achieved splendid actions," said I to my uncle, " and I am come to afford you the means of effacing those which are not to your honour."

" No compliments, Mr. Philosopher ! let me know what you want me to do."

" To protect—to succour this lady."

" Why what is she to me? Are you in love with her too ? "

" I honour, I respect her; and you will partake in these sentiments when I shall have named her to you :—you see Mrs. Hunter before you."

" Mrs. Hunter ! Her husband is a brave man. I saved his life ;—what do you wish me to do for his wife ? "

" To save her honour."

The interesting lady threw herself at my uncle's feet. She related her misfortunes with such grace and feeling, that Thomas, leaning towards her, while a tear moistened his eye, never once thought of raising her up. She had ceased speaking, but he still appeared to listen.

" S'death, Madam ! you recall to my mind a lady I remember to have been as unfortunate as you are, and to whom I rendered some trifling services."

" I never knew any one, Sir, but my mother, whose early misfortunes were comparable to mine."

" Her name ? "

" Lady Seymour."

" Lady Seymour ! Are you the daughter of Lady Seymour, and the wife of Captain Hunter ?—S'death ! while Thomas has a drop of blood in his body, no one shall lift his profane hand against you !—I swear it by my sabre—by your mother !"

Thomas embraced me, thanked me ; he offered Mrs. Hunter his palace—the sovereignty of the island. She limited her wishes to getting fairly

out of it. The two soldiers murmured, and I was not perfectly assured of her safety; agitated as I was by my doubts and fears. I seized the moment when my uncle appeared somewhat softened. I proposed a scheme to him, which would instantly arrange every thing to the general satisfaction.

I had five hundred thousand crowns. My uncle had nearly a million. The resistance of Duboc to his authority was a dangerous example; and it was not to be presumed he would ever be able to add to his fortune by means of confiscations. The best plan, therefore, was to enjoy what he had got. I urged him to quit the island with myself, Leonora, and Mrs. Hunter;—to make the safety of the latter the positive condition on which he would abandon the command to Duboc. I flattered him with the hope of re-establishing himself in the good opinion of the better part of mankind, by restoring a wife to her husband, and a daughter to her mother. My uncle acceded to all these propositions. He sent to the Admiral. Mrs. Hunter smiled for the first time, and I ran to desire my little Nun to prepare for her departure.

I have already said, extremes are nearly allied to each other. Mrs. Hunter, Leonora, and myself were at the height of joy, and at the same time a horrible scene was preparing.—Those of our people who had been at my habitation, were not satisfied with what Leonora had told them. They had been at the magazine, and the result of their information was, that no woman whatever had had carried her any linen that morning. At day-break they went about to the different quarters of our soldiers, and laboured to heat their imaginations —alas! but too apt to be inflamed!—On the other hand, the two soldiers, smitten with the charms of Mrs. Hunter, extolled them every where, and pointed out the place of her retreat. The crowd, indignant that the Chief himself should have viola-

ted the Constitution, appeared before the door of his palace. They demanded, in peremptory terms, the woman who had been concealed from them.—I was near her—she fell lifeless into my arms!

My uncle did not seize his weapons;—of what service would they have been? He threw himself before Mrs. Hunter, extended his hands towards the furies, entreating, promising, and threatening by turns. Accents of rage and unbridled passion were the only answers they deigned to return. “ You wish her to expire under the excess of grief and infamy;—well then, she shall die pure, and I will die with her, since I cannot save her.” He took up his pistols; he placed the muzzle of one to his mouth, and held the other close to Mrs. Hunter, intending to fire them both off at once.—“ To arms! Leave the woman! To arms!” repeated a thousand voices on the outside of the house. The crowd rushed away in various directions; the door was left free. I went out and beheld two ships of the line, four frigates, and six bomb-boats. It was no illusion this time. The English and Spanish colours floated in the air. Mrs. Hunter again breathed; the brigands had forgot her, and thought only of defending themselves.

Let us now return to Lord Seymour, whom we have long neglected. He had retired with his young wife to Brussels, when Fanny so abruptly quitted my uncle, and left him wounded at Dunkirk. Formed to please all who beheld her, she pleased the Governor of the Low Countries.—No one is passionately fond of women unless he is also fond of glory. Seymour would not pass his youth in obscurity. He obtained a commission in the Imperial Army; he gained renown in the Hanoverian war; and his father, overcome by his constancy, and flattered by the splendour of his reputation, finished, as most fathers do, by pardon-

ing him. Seymour returned to England; Lord Chatham gave him a regiment; he distinguished himself at the battle of Minden, and arrived at the highest rank in the army. He had no children. The good old father Thompson daily prayed to heaven to renew his youth in the person of a grandson. His vows were heard. After fifteen years of a most fortunate union, the happiness of Fanny was increased by the birth of a daughter. The King wished to add his favours to those of Nature—Seymour was appointed to the government of Jamaica.

The happy couple began to get into years, but the young lady recalled the graces of their youth. She possessed from her earliest age that disposition to love, which had troubled the first half of the lives of her parents. Captain Hunter pleased her. He was not, in some respects, a suitable match; his fortune was moderate, but he had the esteem of the whole Navy. Lucy expressed her desires to her father, but her father forgot he had been once young and in love himself. He had arrived at an age when mankind are apt to consider every thing but riches and grandeur as mere illusions, and he condemned the choice of his daughter. His daughter deposited her tears in the bosom of her mother. Lady Fanny gave her no advice, but related how she had married. To make such an avowal to her daughter was indirectly authorizing her to imitate her, and she did imitate her.

Seymour was enraged at her marriage and her flight to St. Vincent's, but he tenderly loved her. Lucy frequently wrote to him. Her mother incessantly opposed moderation to passion, and entreaties to obstinacy. Every day Seymour's anger weakened. He thought he might without repugnance act towards his daughter as his father had acted towards him. He was ready to forgive her when Captain Hunter landed at Jamaica, and

informed them, in accents of despair, his wife had been carried off.

The same blow had wounded them both—it also reconciled them. The past disappeared before the fears inspired by the future. Their thoughts were only occupied upon the means of delivering the young lady.

All the colonies of the Allied Powers had long complained of the devastations committed by the French privateers on their coasts with impunity. It had often been proposed to fit out, at their common expense, a considerable armament, entirely to purge the American seas; but it was necessary to have assistance from the Governor of Jamaica. The united forces of that powerful colony could alone ensure success.—Hitherto Seymour had refused to strip the island of any part of its strength, fearing lest the French of St. Domingo and Martinique should take advantage of the circumstance to attack him. The danger of his daughter surmounted every consideration; the expedition was resolved upon. The Portuguese, Spaniards, and Dutch furnished all the men and stores they could obtain; Seymour did the rest.

He took the command of the fleet himself, impatient to engage and punish a man, of whose courage he had heard so much, and whom he was far from suspecting to be the same Thomas to whom Fanny was so much indebted. At Barbadoes he took on board several of the English prisoners we had released, who, knowing our forces and the place of our retreat, offered to serve him as guides. He proposed to command the debarkation of the troops, while Hunter performed the functions of Admiral.

My good doctor was eager to get admitted among the number of those who embarked at Barbadoes. Seymour and Hunter had sworn to exterminate

our whole island, and my doctor sincerely loved me. He painted, in such favourable colours, my humanity, my mildness, and the services I had rendered him, that I was the only person excepted from the general proscription when the fleet anchored before the island.

Hunter and Seymour wished to attack us immediately. My doctor was sensible that if we were forced sword in hand, there would be no quarter for any one. In fact, how is it possible to save the life of a single individual confounded with fifteen hundred others? He urged—he reasoned—he entreated. Neither his arguments nor his prayers could restrain the impatience and indignation of the father, and the furious jealousy of the husband. The doctor then attacked them with their own weapons. "There is nothing," said he to them, "of which these wretches are not capable. Who will answer for it that they will not turn aside your blows by exposing Mrs. Hunter to the first effects of them? Who knows whether, foreseeing the moment of their destruction, they will not revenge their deaths in her blood? It is particularly on her account you have taken up arms, and in order to rescue her you must negotiate."

Seymour and Hunter thought it beneath them to treat with enemies of the public and private peace, but they trembled for the object dearest to them in the world, and fear prevailed over repugnance. The doctor was deputed to propose terms of capitulation.

His first care was to wait upon him he called his good master. He told me I should never more quit him. My uncle, brutal, vulgar, and intemperate, possessed a good heart. He loved me, and I was incapable of abandoning him.—I answered my friend, that gratitude and honour prevented my accepting his offers, unless they were extended to my uncle as well as myself. He assured me that

he had no power to propose any terms in his favour. I replied with a sigh that my destiny was inseparably united to his.

The doctor quitted me with tears in his eyes, and presented himself before our assembled Chiefs.—“I come,” said he to them, “to offer you life, and it is all I can offer you.”

“And our riches?” interrupted Thomas.

“Those whom you have plundered of them, are determined to have them back again.”

“We have acquired them at the price of our blood,” continued my uncle, “and with our blood we will preserve them! Go, and tell those who sent you, that men such as we are, fight, but never capitulate.”

“Bravo, Thomas! bravo!” exclaimed the whole army, and every one repaired to his post.

“Come with me, doctor,” said my uncle to my friend. He conducted him to his palace, and forced him to drink with him. “Here,” pursued he, “I have taken up the profession of a General, and, s’deth! I will support it to the last; but I am proud to show myself a man for a moment. Let that pass. Approach, Madam!” The daughter of Seymour advanced.

“All our people are busily employed: enraged at your departure, they will perhaps assassinate me; but I care not. Profit by the present opportunity; follow the doctor, return to your friends, and tell them I have restored you to them worthy in every respect of their affection and esteem. Tell Seymour with what reluctance I fight against him; tell Captain Hunter that himself and his father-in-law are the men I love dearest in the world, and, s’deth! I will show them I merit their respect! —No thanks! Go, depart, and put cotton in your ears!”

The recommendation was not useless. Two hours after Mrs. Hunter had embraced her father and her husband, the fire commenced on both sides. Hunter and Seymour were only excited by glory ; but that motive is a sufficient one to animate magnanimous souls. The two brave Englishmen admired the singular generosity of my uncle, but they were ambitious of the honour of conquering a man hitherto deemed invincible. Seymour had to justify the favours of his King, and Hunter to efface two defeats. For twenty-four hours seven hundred cannon were played without interruption on both sides. Our island presented the appearance of a tremendous volcano. The day and the night passed away without our sustaining any other loss than fifty men killed and wounded by the bombs. The enemy had a frigate totally dismantled.

The next day the face of affairs changed. The two ships of the line advanced to the mouth of the river, and attacked our West-Indiamen which defended the entrance. Thomas immediately hastened to the scene of action, and the combat became terrible. The artillery of the English was infinitely superior to ours, but it was directed against moveable masses, and an infinite multitude of their shot were spent in the air or in the water. Our two ships were fixed on four anchors, and almost all our guns told. At every moment Thomas crossed the river in a boat or swimming, according as his presence was required. He proceeded from one ship to another, gave his orders, supported the brave, encouraged the weak—he was every where.

Hunter obtained no decided advantage by force ; he determined upon stratagem. He fired grape-shot at our cables, and directed his efforts at them only. He succeeded in cutting them all asunder. Our two ships immediately drifted. They were shorn of their masts, and could not resist the force

of the bar. They were carried up the river, and grounded on the shores ; they were so much inclined, that one of them had part of her keel exposed. Thomas ordered all his troops to get out, and hastened to set her on fire. This manœuvre gave us time to breathe a moment.

Hunter would not draw back. He detached all his boats to extinguish the fire. His ships might have been blown up with our's. He entered the river, encouraged his troops, and protected the descent. The light vessels debarked about four thousand soldiers under cover of the ships of the line ;—it was almost three to one. These different operations occupied three hours at least, and my uncle profited by them.

He considered that his glory and his life depended upon the fate of the battle, and he exerted himself to the utmost to gain it. He ranged thirteen hundred men, which were all he had left, and supported his wings by each of our rocks, now converted into forts. He ordered all the guns, which could not be brought to bear upon the enemy, to be conveyed down. He formed a strong battery, which he placed in his centre. He ordered our people's huts to be all pulled down, and the stakes which formed them. He made an intrenchment, extending throughout the whole line.

You recollect that these forts were each at an extremity of the island, which was only accessible by the river. We consequently could not be turned, and it was difficult to take us in front. Our magazines of every kind, and our treasures, were behind us.

The enemy advanced bravely, though they had no field-pieces, and our artillery made dreadful havoc among their ranks. They lost about three hundred men before they arrived within musket-shot. Animated by Seymour and Hunter, they approached our intrenchments in good order, from

whence a single gun had not yet been fired. A general discharge, timely ordered by Thomas, stopped the most intrepid; the rest appeared disconcerted. They, however, answered our fire; but a second salute, the effect of which was prodigious, entirely disbanded them. It was merely necessary to reload, and wait for them; they would have advanced, in which case they would have been killed to the very last man: finally, the battle would have been gained if our people had preserved their *sang froid*, and obeyed their Chief; but they thought they had nothing more to do than to pursue and exterminate the fugitives. They rushed out in disorder with fixed bayonets, and were stopped in their turn by two thousand English, who rallied at about two hundred paces, and whose good order and discipline rendered them formidable. To the right of the English the Spaniards rallied. The Portuguese and the Dutch ran and took possession of the spot we had just abandoned. Our people found themselves surrounded. Those who defended the forts could no longer fire; their shot would have been directed against us as well as the enemy.

The fortune of the day was changed in a moment: it was no longer a combat, but a horrible massacre. None of our people demanded quarter—all determined to die with arms in their hands. The intrepid Thomas, pierced with wounds, still defended himself, and still appeared formidable. Seymour and Hunter sought him, and called to him. Conducted by the good physician, who exposed his life out of attachment to me, they found my poor uncle, weakened by the loss of blood, with one knee on the ground, and scarce able to support his sabre between his hands. His foes were on the point of finishing him when they arrived; he wished it—he called upon death to relieve him. They saved him in spite of himself.

Could they do less for a man to whom each of them was indebted for his wife, and one of them for his life?

For my part, the moment our people rushed from their intrenchments, I thought, as they did, the battle gained, and I had hastened to caress and comfort my little Nun: but what was my surprise when I beheld two Englishmen and my doctor enter my cottage, bearing my uncle, who appeared without sensation. I asked them if they were prisoners.—“It is you who would be so,” answered Seymour, “if you were less estimable than you are.” He at the same time presented me his hand.

While they were destroying our establishments on the island, from one end to the other, and were blowing up the rocks we had transformed into citadels, the good doctor, Leonora, and myself lavished on my uncle attentions no less affectionate than they were useless. None of his wounds were mortal of themselves; but excess had destroyed the sources of his life, and the second day he expired in our arms! Seymour and Hunter sincerely regretted a man, whose valour more than counterbalanced his defects.

His loss sensibly afflicted me, and it was not the only one I had to sustain. I had for a moment flattered myself with the hope of procuring Leonora a lot worthy of her; and now nothing remained of the immense fortune my uncle and myself had possessed. The conquerors divided it almost before our eyes, and misery seemed to await us, in order to punish us for having indulged in a transitory illusion.—Another surprise! the share of Seymour and Hunter was nearly equal to what we had lost. The doctor interposed a word, and they offered me the whole in so friendly and amiable a manner, that it added an additional value to the benefit they conferred.

I accepted their offers. I embarked with them for Jamaica. I beheld that Fanny, of whom my uncle had so often entertained me. She was no longer handsome, but she was still agreeable. She had preserved the remembrance of Thomas, and she paid the debt of gratitude to his nephew. Mrs. Hunter joined her husband in heaping marks of friendship on me.—“Ah!” I exclaimed, “how sweet, how satisfactory are the charms virtue imparts! I find friends in every place, only because I have exercised the rights of humanity.”

I felt, while I breathed the pure air of honour and virtuous independence, that something was wanting to render my union with Leonora complete. I offered her my hand. She had not ventured to demand it of me, but she accepted it with transport. The wedding was consummated at Seymour’s house. He wished us to remain in Jamaica, but the love of one’s country is never extinguished: besides, I was anxious to revisit my revered parents, whom I had so cruelly abandoned. We embarked with our riches on board a neutral vessel, and arrived happily in France.

I had left my father and mother in the enjoyment of a certain degree of easy circumstances, but for four or five years they had struggled with indigence. I found that all those who had been distinguished for honesty and virtue, had been the victims of anarchy, and had been happy to redeem their lives by the sacrifice of their fortunes. I deplored the misfortunes of my father and mother, and shared with them what I possessed.—But what was my satisfaction at the favourable change I perceived in my unhappy country?—I had left it in a deplorable state. A deluded people were tearing each other to pieces for the sake of obscure and ambitious tyrants, who only sought power in order to oppress them, and for plunderers who shared their spoils. Criminals sat on the seat of justice;

men, ruined by their profusion and debauchery, proscribed the peaceful citizens, in order to obtain possession of their patrimony. Avarice enriched itself without labour ; vengeance was exercised without fear ; licentiousness unrestrained ; and the brutal fury of the multitude destroyed what they were incapable of enjoying.

At my return a clouded sun, but warm and penetrating, animated the horizon. The wretches who had sullied my country, had reverted to their original obscurity and contempt. The impunity of guilt and the violation of the laws, had vanished at the appearance of that astonishing mortal, become the first of heroes by the mere energy of his own great soul. Every faction bowed before him ;—mankind could labour with the certainty of enjoying the fruits of their toils ; the parent was no longer apprehensive of his child being torn from his arms ; the asylum of the peaceful citizen was no longer violated. If misery, the effect of a long and bloody war, was still in some degree felt, the name of the hero who ruled, seemed to give an assurance of peace. May his government be durable !—It must be so ; for where the Chief is surrounded by honest and enlightened men, security must ever attend the social contract.

END.

